

THE LONDON STRIKES.-IV.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

As I said at the close of last week's article, it is quite recently that the English workman has begun to realize that foreign competition is a matter which concerns him. Up till five minutes ago, as it were, he seemed to be under the impression that foreign competition was more or less a bugbear—a booby used by his employer to frighten him with, and that, whatever terrors it possessed, were terrors for English employers only, and not for their workpeople. And this delusion, as I explained, was planted in the mind of the British workman and carefully fostered by the Liberal party and its political leaders, the lights of the Liberal party and Manchester school, for their own selfish political and commercial purposes. The political purpose to be attained by the Liberal party by unrestricted foreign competition was the destruction of their political opponents, the landed class. If the corn and other agricultural products of Russia, India, and America could be got into English markets duty free, then the agricultural industry of England was doomed, and with it was doomed that class who are the natural opponents of the Liberal party, the landowners of England. The object was attained; the corn laws were repealed, and by one blow the agricultural industry of England and the political power of her landowners were partly ruined. The commercial purpose to be attained by the Liberal party by unrestricted foreign competition was the cheapening of commodities. If the corn and other agricultural products of foreign lands were admitted to English markets duty free, food would be cheaper, and labour being cheaper, the profits of the men of the Manchester school, the Brights and Cobdens would be greater. Of course, these purposes were not openly avowed. On the contrary, it was pretended that the policy of free trade was in the interest of the workers. The story of the big loaf and the little loaf was invented, and so skilfully was it told that the workers actually believed in it. The class and political prejudices of the labourers were worked upon, and the success of the device exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the "Free Trade" lecturers. Hence, who ought to have known what ruinous results were certain to follow, proclaimed a policy that destroyed his occupation, because it at the same time offered a vent for his grudge against his master; and the town artisan, deluded by the specious sophistries of Messrs. Cobden, Bright, and Co., and eager to strike a blow at an anti-democratic class, flung up his cap for a measure that had for its aim and end his own economic enslavement. I am writing of forty-five years ago, and if we want to see surviving specimens of the "big loaf" and the "little loaf" not yet found in Mr. Joseph Arch and the members of the London Radical clubs, who applaud Professor Stuart's proposal to put an exceptional tax on ground values. Out of every hundred of the men assailed by Messrs. Arch and Stuart, ninety-nine are Conservatives in politics, and it is for that reason, and not because they are landowners, that they are assailed. This fact is not quite understood by almost everybody, the only persons who do not yet understand it being the followers of the two gentlemen above-named. That this knowledge will come with fuller education goes without saying, and that fuller education will come to them shortly is also certain. But, in the meantime, their prejudice, born of ignorance, and to be reckoned with, and no one recognises more keenly than I do what a formidable obstacle it is to a correct treatment of the great evil of foreign competition.

The evil of foreign competition comes to the English workman in two shapes. The first shape is in the form of the foreign workman, who comes to England able and willing to undersell the native workman in the English labour market. The foreign workman is able to undersell the Englishman by reason of his more penurious habits and lower standard of living. He is willing to undersell him because, as a rule, "there is no damned nonsense" of the solidarity of labour—or of anything else outside of himself—in your foreigner. He is for himself, and the devil may have everybody else for aught he cares. Now this interesting creature usually comes to England in rags, a virtual pauper. He could not if he would, and he could not if he could, stand out with English workmen for the employment of his services. He is not a member of their trade society, and therefore has no strike pay to subsist on. His condition, in fact, leaves him no choice. He must accept whatever terms are offered him by the employers, and he does so. It is true that his services are not so efficient as were the services of the Englishman whose place he fills. But what of that? That is a question for the employer, and if he is satisfied with the arrangement, nobody else has any right to interfere. The matter of fact, what usually takes place is this. The employer bears with the shortcomings of his new hand, and instructs and helps him in his task. For this he accounts himself amply compensated by showing his men he can do without them, and getting his work done cheaper. And if there is any defect in the work, a defect due to the inefficiency of the new hand, the employer at almost always catch up and conceal the defect, thus passing on the loss to the shoulders of the consumer of the article. So much for the employer's welfare under the arrangement. The foreigner's share is that he quickly learns a useful trade, and, while doing so, is treated with great indulgence and what to him appears princely liberality. The locked-out English workman alone suffers. For a while he lingers in the haunts, vaguely hoping that some day or other the agreement with the foreigner will fall through and he be taken back to his old place either on his own or the old terms. But none of these things come to pass. He has appealed to reason, and the verdict has gone against him. Then he tries elsewhere for work in a half-hearted sort of way, but finds every workshop full, and at last he either falls thieving, or he takes his little household gods upon his back and goes out into the world to begin life afresh, a sadder and a wiser man. This shape, then, of the evil of foreign competition is clearly a very grievous one to the English workman, and that it is so he himself is beginning to realise. The Conservative party is often taunted, sometimes justly, with failure to understand the feelings of the English working class, and in instituting a Parliamentary inquiry into the subject of foreign pauper immigration into this country, the present Government struck a responsive chord in the breasts of the English people, and if it brings forward any legislative proposals calculated to remedy the evils which that inquiry revealed, there can be no doubt that such proposals would be received with universal acclamation by every section of the community.

The other shape in which the evil of foreign competition comes to the English workman is in the form of products. That this form of the evil is as grievous as the other the English workman does not yet quite perceive, but he is gradually getting to understand the question. Hitherto, as I have pointed out, he has been deluded by "Free Trade" lecturers into the belief that, inasmuch as he is a consumer, it is to his interest that products should be cheap. Now, however, the scales are falling from his eyes. He is beginning to realise that, although he is undoubtedly a consumer, he is also a producer; that, in fact, he is a producer first, and a consumer after, and that if he safeguards his interests as a producer, he can safely leave his interests as a consumer to take care of themselves. Or, to speak more exactly, his interests as a consumer may be safely left to the care of that powerful section of the community who are consumers only, and who, being consumers only, may be trusted to pull down the price of products as low as they can be pulled. It is to the interest of the consumers only that products should be low-priced; it is to the interest of the producers that products should be high-priced; and these two great truths are gradually taking root in the minds of the English working class, all

the sophistries of the Manchester school to the contrary notwithstanding. The English workman has already satisfied himself that it is to his interest that cheap foreign labour, when it is in the form of living men, should be excluded from the English labour market, and he will be long also satisfied that it is equally to his interest that cheap foreign labour, when it is in the form of products, should likewise be excluded. For what shall it profit him if he excludes the cheap foreign workmen and admits the cheap foreign products? Clearly nothing. Take, for example, the case of an English carpenter. He has a dispute with his employer over some question of wages or hours. He strikes, and by a rigid measure of picketing he prevents his employer from getting other men to do the work. But he cannot picket the post, and his employer writes to Sweden or Norway, and imports from these countries ready-made doors and window frames at very low prices, and so disposes with the services of English carpenters altogether. What better is the English carpenter for his strike? Is not his last state worse than his first? Moreover, what about the just English employer who has conceded the men's terms? How is he to hold his own against his rival who has imported the cheap foreign products? Obviously, the workmen have a duty to perform to this just employer, namely, to see that he suffers no harm through conceding their demands. And the only way they can perform that duty is by imposing such duties on the cheap imported doors and window-frames as shall bring their cost up to the level of the cost of the doors and window-frames made in England and paid for with fair wages. The English workman, I repeat, is beginning to see and understand all this, and I am very hopeful of the support that he will give to any party, Conservative or Liberal, who will introduce legislation to remedy the evil of unrestricted foreign competition. There is a point of view from which the question of foreign competition must be regarded, namely, the national one. We have seen that it is an evil, a great evil, from the point of view of the workman and from the point of view of the just and fair employer. Let us now examine it from the point of view of the nation. As this, however, is an extremely important point, requiring some what exhaustive treatment, I must defer its examination until next week.

EXCITING SCENE OFF THE ANGLESEY COAST.

Details are to hand of the wreck of the barque Tenby Castle off Penrhos Head, Anglesey, on Tuesday. The coastguards, on arriving at the spot, fired a rocket line; but this failed to reach the ship, and the chief officer, Mr. J. O. Williams, at once despatched a man on horseback to call out the Rhoscolwyn lifeboat, five miles away. The men of the Rhoscolwyn lifeboat, under the command of George Jones, ex-lifeboatman; and John Morris, of Glanorscoch, farmer, launched a small boat at great risk, and got within ten yards of the ship's side. Through their bravery three men were brought safely ashore. They made a second trip, and called out to the eleven men on board to jump into the sea, as the spot where the ship lay was in a most dangerous position. They refused to do so, with the result that they were all drowned. The Holyhead lifeboat, on arriving at the spot, found that the vessel was in a sinking condition, and that the crew were not on board. For some time they stood by, with the view of picking up the men, but they were only successful in picking up one, who, however, was found to be dead before they reached land. Great praise is due to the three men who gallantly manned the small boat in a dark night, and pulled through the tremendous surf in order to reach the vessel.

A STRANGE CASE.

At the Westminster Police Court, Alice Vincent, a tall, well-dressed young woman, lady's maid to Mrs. Saxon, at 4, Fourth Avenue, West Brighton, where she was arrested, was brought up on remand, before Mr. D'Eyncourt, charged with stealing, between October 29th and November 26th, a carriage rug and other property, valued on the charge-sheet at £10, the property of her former mistress, Mrs. Shum-Storrey, widow, of 28, Westbourne-place, Piccadilly. Some of the articles were found in the prisoner's box at Brighton. Detective-sergeant Benson, who arrested her, and she then said that she was innocent, and that the prosecutrix gave the things to her. This Mrs. Shum-Storrey positively denied.—On Monday Mr. St. John Wortner appeared for the prosecutrix, who was stated to be unable to attend through illness, and said that she was not desirous of proceeding further in the matter. He asked that the prisoner might be discharged. The case seemed fully proved.—Mr. Wortner: The lady does not wish to damage the girl's character.—Mr. D'Eyncourt: But she has been brought before a magistrate, and the case has been fully proved. I cannot allow it; I cannot permit people to launch felony charges and then withdraw them after giving evidence.—Mr. Rymer, representing the prisoner, said he had witnesses in court for her, but before he called them he had some questions to ask Mrs. Storrey. There were some very peculiar circumstances in connection with this case which had not come out, and another person had been taken into custody by the police and escaped. That had not been mentioned.—Mr. Wortner: My friend knows very well the reason why that person is not before you.—Mr. D'Eyncourt: I am sure you remember that the prisoner on bail until Tuesday, when the prosecutrix attended and signed her deposition.—Asked by Mr. D'Eyncourt why she was anxious to withdraw the charge, she said her only desire was to give the prisoner another chance.—Mr. D'Eyncourt inquired what evidence there was for the prisoner.—Mr. Rymer: I have no evidence to call to-day. I suppose you have made up your mind to send the case for trial.—Mr. D'Eyncourt: No, I don't. I am prepared to hear the witness you said you could call yesterday.—Mr. Rymer: My instructions are not to call them.—Mr. D'Eyncourt: Very well, then; the prisoner is committed for trial to the sessions.—Mr. Rymer assumed that the same bail would be taken as before.—Mr. D'Eyncourt: There will be no bail now; the case is unproved.—The prisoner was removed in custody, a further appeal for bail being unsuccessful.

AN OLD HOAX.

At the West London Police Court on Wednesday, a gentleman residing in Sinclair-road, Hammersmith, made an application to the magistrate under the following circumstances. He stated that an advertisement had appeared for 300 men who were wanted at Barnum's, his address in Sinclair-road being given. The consequence was that on Friday, Saturday, and even that morning, a large number of men came to his house, wasting their time, and at considerable expense. He had nothing to do with Barnum's show. He believed that he knew who was the author of the advertisement. He asked whether it was not a case of provoking a breach of the peace.—Mr. Plowden said he was afraid he could not assist the applicant. It was a curious thing to do, but it was one of those acts which did not come within the reach of the criminal or civil law.—The applicant said his windows would have been broken if it had not been for the interference of the police.—Mr. Plowden remarked that the applicant's grievance was not against the men, but against the parties who caused them to come.—The applicant: I have to do with the same fellow some day, but don't say I advised you. (Laughter.)—The applicant then withdrew.

How much a little "Perfume" improves the washing now! It gathers passes all the day. From all over its power. How useful it is. MARY'S PETROLIN SOAP POWDER, a spontaneous cleanser, saves rubbing and scrubbing. Sold everywhere in 10lb. Pails or Four Pails in Cases.—Works, Australia-st., S.W. 1st.

DETERMINED PRIZE FIGHTS.

The fight between Gibbons and Cuchina in America has resulted in favour of Gibbons, who knocked his man down twice in the twenty-fourth round. It was a terrible fight, and both men were severely punished. Cuchina was claimed continually, but Gibbons forced the fighting, and gained first blood with a right-hand over the left eye, cutting a gash two inches deep and breaking one of the bones in his own hand in the effort. The two knock-down blows delivered by Gibbons were both left-hand punches in the stomach. John L. Sullivan and Danby were both present.

A "Set-to" Near London

At an early hour on Thursday morning a prize fight, described as one of the old-fashioned sort, was brought off successfully some sixteen or seventeen miles from the metropolis, the principals being "Bertie" Lumsden, of Marlborough, and George (Duke) Beechell, of the Potteries, the former a labourer, and the latter a canal boat hand plying from Stoke-on-Trent to London. The stakes were only £15, but the fight is described as a very determined one. Fifteen rounds were fought, and in the last Beechell drove his right heavily on Lumsden's throat, knocking him out of time, and after the usual interval was declared the winner. Beechell was seconded by his two brothers, whilst Lumsden had the service of J. Reid and Bill Marton. A well-known ex-sportsman and now publican, acted as timekeeper and referee.

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN A BIBLE CLASS.

A singular and painful incident is reported from Birmingham, just as the members of the Bible class which meets in the school-room of the Church of the Messiah were about to separate, the secretary, a young man named Walter Johnson, 24 years of age, suddenly jumped up, and in front of the whole company placed the muzzle of a revolver against his neck. Before his companions could prevent him he fired, and then fell to the ground. For a moment it was thought he had killed himself, but fortunately this proved to be so. Medical aid was at once summoned, and an examination revealed the extraordinary fact that the young fellow was scarcely injured at all. The powder had slightly discoloured the neck, and there was a mark where the bullet had scratched the skin. His falling so suddenly is attributed to fright, or to the conviction that he had shot himself. He was conveyed to the police station, and on being charged expressed deep contrition, and said he had been overworked. The doctor was of opinion that Johnson only needed a night's rest to recover himself, and, as responsible friends undertook to take care of him, he was released on bail. There is no doubt that he had recently been overtaxing his strength by working twelve or fourteen hours a day, and this had led to chronic depression, accompanied by sleepless nights. He was accompanied by a friend, who was premeditated, as the revolver was bought a considerable time ago for a purely innocent purpose, and the conclusion rather is that the possession of the weapon in a moment of extreme despondency proved an irremediable temptation.

EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF STEALING A FISHING SMACK.

A most extraordinary case was brought before the Ryde (L.W.) magistrates this week. A young man, named Harry William Roberts, of Shotley, Harstead, Ipswich, was charged with stealing a fishing smack, value £60, the property of George Jeffrey, waterman, of Ryde. The prisoner appeared to have had a series of remarkable adventures. Running away from a vessel in Newport River, he stole a cement mill and a steamer. He stole a mackintosh and sold it. He then crossed to Southampton and stole a yacht's boat. Then he broke into two yachts and stole a jib, boots, and mackintosh lights. He set sail in the stolen boat, sailed down Southampton Water, and landed at Sheepfold, where he stole a live lamb and other things. He sailed these to Fish-courne, and there broke into two more yachts, stealing various articles. Then he sailed to Ryde and got on board the smack now in question, which he appropriated, and set sail in her. He killed and cooked the lamb, and spent Sunday night at St. Helen's; thence he proceeded eastward, when the smack became unmanageable, and he ran her ashore. As he seemed to be about to become a total wreck he got into a boat and rowed ashore at Portlaine. The coastguard picked up and helped him, but he refused to give up the smack, and the sheep aroused their suspicions, and they gave him into custody. He was now remanded. The smack became a total wreck, and the Ryde fishermen has lost his means of subsistence.

CHARGE OF FORGING A MORTGAGE DEED.

At the Clerkenwell Police Court on Thursday, Emily Walton, aged 37, a married woman, of Rodney-street, Liverpool, was charged on a warrant with forging and uttering a forged deed, purporting to be a mortgage deed of certain real estate from one Anne Walton to Alfred William Carpenter, and to have been signed, sealed, and delivered by the same Anne Walton. Detective-sergeant Scandrett, proved, arresting the prisoner in Newport the previous day, and on his reading the warrant over to her she made no reply.—Mr. C. Preston, solicitor, said that evidence would be given that the prisoner obtained £1,100 on a false mortgage deed, and he applied for a remand, as the principal witnesses were not now in attendance.—The prisoner was remanded for a week, bail being refused.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE CREWE RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

The following letter, dated the 5th inst., has been addressed by Mr. Gladstone to the editor of the *Crewe Chronicle*.—"Dear Sir,—The case at Crewe, as set forth in your letter and in the *Crewe and Nantwich Chronicle* is so scandalously bad, that you must forgive me for saying I am compelled to suspend my belief until I know what any such among the local officers of the London and North-Western Railway Company are in need in the charge have any say to it. They, the paid servants of a great commercial company, which is not, I apprehend, a Primrose League, are accused of allowing their own political opinions to weigh, and to weigh perversely, on the employment and promotion of workmen, which, if it be true, is neither more nor less than a shameful malversation of a public trust. Such proceedings are bad enough when unhappily any landlord or employer is tempted by a selfish fanaticism 'to do what he will with his own,' so as to inflict suffering upon his fellow subjects. But when this is done by persons who are themselves only servants against their fellow-servants who happen to be of a degree lower in the scale; and they do what they will, not with what is their own, but with what is not their own, either to indulge their passions, to promote their interests, or to operate their opinions, their conduct is, in the last degree, shameful and unworthy. As I have said, I suspend my opinion until these very grave and quite sufficiently particular allegations have been answered. Should there, however, be an apparent intention to withhold a reply, and should you consider it desirable, you will be quite at liberty to publish this letter.—Yours, very faithfully, W. E. GLADSTONE."

At the last meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee of the London County Council a motion was unanimously agreed to: That all park under the control of the Council be kept open to the public in a later hour in the evening whenever the ice is in a fit condition for skating. The committee have decided that Battersea Park on these special occasions shall remain open until ten p.m. instead of four. The time for Victoria and other parks will shortly be fixed.

KEA'S COMPOUND FOR COUGHS AND COLDS (Linedale, Antwerp, Belgium, Squills, &c., with Chlorodyne), is, 14d. London. Catholicism Pills, a pleasant aperient, 9d., 1s. 14d. Kea's best Cement for broken articles, 6d. Kea's Chloro-Linedale Compound Lotion, a medicated liniment, 6d. 1s. 14d. Kea's Compound for Coughs and Colds (Linedale, Antwerp, Belgium, Squills, &c., with Chlorodyne), is, 14d. London. Catholicism Pills, a pleasant aperient, 9d., 1s. 14d. Kea's best Cement for broken articles, 6d. Kea's Chloro-Linedale Compound Lotion, a medicated liniment, 6d. 1s. 14d. Kea's Compound for Coughs and Colds (Linedale, Antwerp, Belgium, Squills, &c., with Chlorodyne), is, 14d. London. Catholicism Pills, a pleasant aperient, 9d., 1s. 14d. Kea's best Cement for broken articles, 6d. Kea's Chloro-Linedale Compound Lotion, a medicated liniment, 6d. 1s. 14d. Kea's Compound for Coughs and Colds (Linedale, Antwerp, Belgium, Squills, &c., with Chlorodyne), is, 14d. London. 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THE FIRM OF GIRDLESTONE.

A ROMANCE OF THE UNROMANTIC.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

AUTHOR OF "MICHAEL CLARKE," "A STUDY IN SCARLET," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAND OF DIAMONDS.

The anxious father had not very long to wait before he heard tidings of his son. Upon the 1st of June the great vessel weighed her anchor in the Southampton Water, and steamed past the Needles into the Channel. On the 5th she was reported from Madeira, and the merchant received telegrams both from the agent of the firm and from his son. Then there was a long interval of silence, for the telegraph did not extend to the Cape at that time, but at last, on the 8th of August, a letter announced Ezra's safe arrival. He wrote again from Wellington, which was the railway terminus, and finally there came a long epistle from Kimberley, the capital of the mining district, in which the young man described his eight hundred miles drive up country and all the adventures which overtook him on the way.

"This place, Kimberley," he said in his letter, "is a Dutch town, as the Dutchmen call it, has grown into a fair sized town, though a few years ago it was just a camp. Now there are churches, banks, and a club in it. There are a sprinkling of well-dressed people in the streets, but the majority are grimy-looking chaps from the diggings, with slouched hats and coloured shirts, rough fellows to look at, though quiet enough as a rule. Of course, there are blacks everywhere, of all shades, from pure jet up to the lightest yellow. Some of these things I have seen, and are quite independent. You would be surprised at their impertinence. I kicked one of them in the hotel yesterday, and he asked me what the devil I was doing, so I knocked the insolent scoundrel down. He says that he will sue me, but I cannot believe that the law is so servile as to bolster up a black man against a white one."

Though Kimberley is the capital of the mining fields, it is not there that the actual mining is done. That goes on in the outlying districts, which are dotted along the Vaal River for fifty or sixty miles. The stones are generally bought at the camp immediately after they have been found, and are paid for by cheques on banks in Kimberley. I have, therefore, transferred our money to the South African Bank here. All goes well for our business. I start to-morrow for Hebron, Klippdrift, and other of the mining centres to see for myself how business is done and to make offers for a few stones, so as to get myself known. As soon as the news comes I shall buy in all that offers. Keep your eyes on that fellow Dimsdale, and let him know nothing of what is going on."

He wrote again about a fortnight afterwards, and his letter, as it crossed the Atlantic, passed the outward mail, which bore the news of two wonderful diamonds found made by an English geologist among the Ural Mountains. "I am now on a tour among the camps," he said. "I have worked night through from Hebron to Klippdrift, Pennick, Cawood's Hope, Waldeck's Plant, Neukirk's Hope, Winterthur, and Blue-jacket. To-morrow I push on to Delparte's Hope and Larkin's Flat. I am well received wherever I go, except by the dealers, who are mostly German Jews. They hear that I am a London capitalist, and fear that I may send up the prices. They little know! I bought stones all the way along, but not very valuable ones, for we must husband our resources."

"The process of mining is very simple. The men dig pits in loose gravel lying along the banks of the river, and it is in these pits that the diamonds are found. The black men, or 'boys,' as they call them, do all the work, and the 'boss,' or master, superintends. Everything that turns up belongs to the 'boss,' but the boys have a fixed rate of wages, which never varies, whether the work is paying or not. I was standing at Hebron watching one of the gangs working when the white chap gave a shout, and dived his hand into a heap of stuff he had just turned over, pulling out a dirty looking little lump about the size of a marble. At his shout all the other fellows from every claim within hearing gathered round, until there was quite a crowd."

"It's a fine stone," said the man that turned it up.

"Fifty carats if it's one," cried another, weighing it in the palm of his hand.

"I had my scales with me, so I offered to weigh it. It was sixty-four and a half carats. Then they washed it and examined it. There was a lot of whispering among them, and then the one who had found it came forward."

"You deal, don't you, Mr. Girdlestone?" he said.

"Now and then," I answered, "but I'm not very keen about it. I came out here more for pleasure than business."

"Well," he said, "you may go far before you see a finer stone than this. What will you bid for it?"

"I looked at it. It's off-coloured," I said.

"It's white," said he and one or two of his chums.

"Gentlemen," I said, "it's not white. There are two shades of yellow in it. It is worth little or nothing."

"Why, if it is yellow it makes it all the more valuable," said a big fellow with a black beard and curly trousers. "A yellow stone's as good as a white."

"Yes," I answered, "a pure yellow stone is. But this is neither one nor the other. It's off colour, and you know that as well as I."

"Won't you bid for it, then?" said one of them.

"I'll bid seventy pounds," I said, "but not a penny more."

"You should have heard the howl they all set up. 'It's worth five hundred,' the fellow cried. 'All right,' I said, 'keep it and sell it for that; good day, and I went off. The stone was sent after me that evening with a request for my cheque, and I sold it for a hundred two days afterwards. You see old Van Helmer's training has come in very handy. I just tell you this little anecdote to let you see that though I'm new in the work I'm not to be done. Nothing in the papers here from Russia. I am ready, come when it may. What would you do if there should be any hit and the affair did not come off? Would you cut and run, or would you stand by your colours and pay a shilling or so in the pound? The more I think of it the more I curse your insanity in getting us into such a mess. Good-bye."

"He is right. It was insanity," said the old merchant leaning his head upon his hands. "It seems unfeeling of the lad to say so when he is so far away, but he was always plain and blunt. If the affair did not come off—he must have some doubts about the matter, else he would not even suppose such a thing. God knows what I should do then. There are other ways—other ways. He passed his hand over his eyes as he spoke, as though to shut out some ugly vision. Such a wan, strange expression played over his grim features that the face of his old friend, the esteemed man of business of Fenchurch-street, was lost in thought for some little time, and then, rising, he touched the bell upon the table. Gilray trotted in upon the signal so rapidly and noiselessly, that he might have been one of those convenient genies in the Eastern fables, only that the little clerk's appearance, from the tips of his ink-stained fingers to the toes of his scuffed boots, was so hopelessly prosaic that what he was, to picture him as anything but what he was, was impossible."

"Ah, Gilray!" the merchant began, "is Mr. Dimsdale in the office?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's all right. He seems to be very regular in his attendance."

"Very, sir."

"And seems to take to the business very well."

"Uncommonly quick, sir, to be sure," said the head clerk. "What with work among the ships, and work in the office, he's a bit late and early."

"That is very right," said the old man, playing with the letter weights. "Application in youth, Gilray, leads to leisure in old age. Is the Maid of Athens unloading?"

"Mr. Dimsdale has been down to her this morning, sir. They're getting the things out fast. He wants to call attention to the state of the vessel, Mr. Girdlestone. He says that it's making water even in dock, and that some of the hands say that they won't go back in her."

"But that's John Girdlestone's business, isn't it?"

"What are the Government inspectors for? There is no use paying them if we are to inspect ourselves. If they insist upon any alterations they shall be made."

"They were there, sir, at the same time as Mr. Dimsdale," said Gilray diffidently.

"Well, what then?" asked his employer.

"He says, sir, that the inspectors went down to the ship and had some champagne with Captain Downey. They then proposed themselves to be very well satisfied with the state of the vessel and came away."

"There you are!" the senior partner cried triumphantly. "Of course these men can see at a glance how things stand, and if things had really been wrong they would have called attention to it. Let us have no more of these false alarms. You must say a few words on the point to Mr. Dimsdale, as coming from yourself, not from me. Tell him to be more careful before he jumps to conclusions."

"I will, sir."

"And bring me ledger No. 33."

Gilray stretched up his arm and took down a fat little ledger from a high shelf, which he laid respectfully before his employer. Then, seeing that there was no longer wanted, he withdrew.

Ledger No. 33 was secured by a clear and lock—the latter a patent one which defied all tamperers. John Girdlestone took a small key from his pocket and opened it with a quick snap. A precious volume lay before him, for it was the merchant's private book, which alone contained a true record of the financial state of the firm, all others being made merely for show. Without it he would have been unable to keep his son in the dark for so many months until bitter necessity at last compelled him to show his hand.

He turned the pages over slowly and sadly. Here was a record of the sums sunk in the Late Taaganika Gold Company, which was to have paid 33 per cent., and which fell to pieces in the second month of its existence. Here was the money advanced to Durer, Hallett, and Co., on the strength of securities which proved to be the most dishonest of securities when tested. Further on was the account of the dealings of the firm with the Levant Petroleum Company, the treasurer of which had levanted with the greater part of the capital. Here, too, was a memorandum of the sums sunk upon the Evening Star and the Providence, whose unfortunate collision had well-nigh proved the death-blow of the firm. It was melancholy reading, and perhaps the last page was the most melancholy of all. On it the old man had drawn up in a condensed form an exact account of the present condition of the firm's finances. Here it is, exactly word for word as he had written it down himself.

GIRDLESTONE AND CO.

October, 1874.

Debit.	Credit.
Debit incurred previous to this month, to Ezra, ...	Ezra, in Africa, holds this money, with which to speculate ...
£24,000	Balance in bank, including what remains of last month's interest ...
£25,000	£4,000
£49,000	Profit on the cargo of Maud of Athens, now in port ...
£1,125	£2,000
Working expenses of the firm during the last six months, including cost of ships, at £150 a month ...	Profits on the cargo of Black Eagle, Swan, and Panther, calculated at the same rate ...
£8,000	£6,000
Private expenses at Ecclestone-square, say ...	Deficit ...
£1,000	£25,425
Expenses of Langworthy in Russia, and of my dear son in Africa, say ...	
£600	
Insurance ...	
£1,200	
Total ...	Total ...
£27,825	£27,825

All this money must be found within nine months at the outside.

"Come, it's not so very bad after all," the merchant muttered, after he had gazed over these figures very slowly and carefully. He leaned back in his chair and looked up at the ceiling with a much more cheerful expression upon his face. "At the worst, it is less than thirty thousand pounds. Why, many firms would think little of it. The fact is, that I have so long been accustomed to big balances on the right side that it seems to be a very dreadful thing now that it lies the other way. A dozen things may happen, he continued, with a darker look, "that I have dipped into my credit so freely that I could not borrow any more without exciting suspicion and having the whole swarm down on us. After all, our hopes lie in the diamonds. Ezra cannot fail. He must succeed. Who can prevent him?"

"Major Tobias Clutterbuck," cried the sharp, creaky voice of Gilray as if in answer to the question, and the little clerk, who had knocked at the door twice unnoticed, opened the door and ushered in the old campaigner.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MAJOR TOBIAS CLUTTERBUCK COMES IN FOR A THOUSAND POUNDS.

John Girdlestone had frequently heard his son speak of the major in the days when they had been intimate, and had always attributed some of the young man's more obvious vices to the effects of this unwelcome companionship. He had also heard from Ezra a mangled version of the interview and quarrel in the private room of Nelson's Restaurant. Hence, as may be imagined, his feelings towards his visitor were far from friendly, and he greeted his visitor with the coldest of possible bows. The major, however, was by no means abashed by this chilling reception, but stumped forward with beaming face and his pudgy hand outstretched so that the other had no alternative but to shake it, which he did very gingerly and reluctantly.

"And how are ye?" said the major, stepping back a pace or two, and inspecting the merchant as though he were examining his points with the intention of purchasing him. "Many's the time I've heard talk of ye. It's a real treat to see ye. How are ye?" Pouncing upon the other's unresponsive hand, he wrung it again with effusion.

"I am indebted to Providence for fairly good health, sir," John Girdlestone answered coldly.

"May I request you to take a seat?"

"That was what my friend Fagyn was trying to do for twelve years, and ruined himself over it in the end. He put up at Murphy's town in the Con. I was the wrong paper be mistake. Ha! ha!" The major laughed boisterously at his own anecdote and mopped his forehead with his handkerchief.

"The two men as they stood opposite each other were a strange contrast, the one tall, grave, white and emotionless, the other noisy and pompous and with protuberant military chest and roundabout features. From under the shaggy eyebrows of the latter gleamed the light-coloured lashes of the major, there came the same keen, restless, shifting glance. Both were crafty, and each was keenly on his guard against the other."

"I have heard of you from my son," the merchant said, motioning his visitor to a chair. "You were, I believe, in the habit of meeting together for the purpose of playing cards, billiards,

and other such games, which I by no means countenance myself, but to which my son is unhappily somewhat addicted."

"You don't play yourself," said the major in a sympathetic voice. "Gad, sir, it's never too late to begin, and many a man has put in a very comfortable old age on billiards and whist. Now, if ye feel inclined to make a start, I'll give ye seventy-five pounds in a hundred for a commencement."

"Thank you," said the merchant dryly. "It is not one of my ambitions. Was this challenge the business upon which you came?"

The old soldier laughed until his merriment startled the clerks in the counting-house. "Be jabers," he said in a wheezy voice, "d'ye think I came five miles to do that? No, sir, I wanted to talk to ye about your son."

"My son!"

"Yes, your son. He's a smart lad—very smart indeed—about as quick as they make 'em. He may be a trifle coarse at times, but that's the spirit of the age, me dear sir. He friend Tullerton, of the Blues, says that delicacy went out of fashion with hair powder and beauty patches. He's a damned satirical fellow is Tullerton. Don't know him, eh?"

"No, sir, I don't," Girdlestone said angrily; "nor have I any desire to make his acquaintance. Let us proceed to business, for my time is valuable."

The major looked at him with an amiable smile. "That quick temper runs in the family," he said. "I've noticed it in your son, Ezra. As I said before, he's a smart lad; but, me friend, he's shockingly rash and extremely indiscreet. Ye must speak to him about it."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked the merchant, white with anger. "Have you come to insult him in his absence?"

"Absence," said the soldier, still smiling blandly over his stock. "That's the very point I wanted to get at. He is away in Africa—at the diamond fields. A wonderful enterprise, considering me dear sir, will ye that he would be culpably foolish—culpably so, indeed!"

"And if on the top of that he gave ye all the details of his scheme, without even waiting to see if ye favoured it or not, he would be most indiscreet wouldn't he? Your own good sense, me dear sir, will tell ye that he would be culpably foolish—culpably so, indeed!"

"Well, sir," said the old man in a hoarse voice. "Well," continued the major, "I have no doubt that your son told ye of the interesting little conversation that we had together. He was good enough to promise that if I went to Russia and pretended to discover a fictitious mine I would be liberal rewarded by the firm. I was under the necessity of pointing out to him that certain principles on which we family—here the major inflated his chest—"on which we family are accustomed to act would prevent me from taking advantage of his offer. He then, I am sorry to say, lost his temper, and some words passed between us, the result of which was that we parted so rapidly, he jabers, that I had hardly time to make him realise how great an indiscretion he had committed."

The merchant sat still, but grew whiter and whiter.

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The merchant still sat perfectly still, tapping the table with his black ebony ruler.

"Of course, after hearing a sketch of the plan," continued the major, "my curiosity was so aroused that I could not help following the details with interest. I saw the gentleman who departed for Russia—Langworthy, I believe, was his name. Gad, I knew a chap of that name in the Marine who used to drink raw brandy and cayenne before breakfast every morning. Did ye?"

"Of course you couldn't. What was I talking of, at all?"

Girdlestone stared gloomily at his visitor. The latter took a pinch of snuff from a tortoise-shell box, and flicked away a few wandering grains which settled upon the front of his coat.

"Yes," he went on, "I saw Langworthy off to Russia. Then I saw your son start for Africa. He's an interesting lad, and sure to do well. I'm a Colonel non animus mutant, as we used to say at Clonowes. He'll always come to the front wherever he is as long as he avoids little ships like this one we're speaking of. About the same time I heard that Girdlestone and Co. had raised ready money to the extent of five and thirty thousand pounds. That's gone to Africa, too, I presume. It's a lot of money to invest in such a game, and it might be safe if ye were the one people that knew about it, but when there are others—"

"Others?"

"Why, me of course," said the major. "I know about it and more to be taken in the swim with you. Sure, I could go this evening to the diamond merchants about town and give them a tip about the coming fall in prices that would rather astound 'em. Clutterbuck," cried the merchant, his voice quivered with suppressed passion. "You have come into possession of an important commercial secret. Why beat about the bush any longer? What is the object of your visit to-day? What is it that you want?"

"There now!" the major said, addressing himself and smiling more amiably than ever. "That's business. Be about there, where you should be. You have the pull. You go straight to the point and stick there. Ah, when I look at ye, I can't help thinking of your son. The same intelligent eye, the same cheery expression, the same devil-may-care manner and dry humour."

"Answer my question, will you?" the merchant interrupted savagely.

"And the same hasty temper," continued the major, "I forgot, me dear sir, it was ye I was speaking of."

"What is it you want?"

"Ah, yes, of course. What is it I want?" the old soldier said meditatively. "Some would say more, some less. Some would want half, but that is overdoing it. How does a thousand pounds strike you? Yes, I think we may put it at a thousand pounds."

"You want a thousand pounds?"

"You're been wanting it all my life. The difference is that I'm going to get it now."

"And for what?"

"Sure, for silence—for neutrality. We're all in it now, and there's a fair division of labour. You plan, your son works, I hold me tongue. I make your tens of thousands, I make my modest little thousand. We'll get paid for our trouble."

"And suppose I refuse?"

"Gad, sir, I haven't known ye long, but I have far too high an opinion of ye to suppose ye could do anything so foolish. If ye refuse, your speculation is thrown away. There's no help for it. Be that, it would be painful for me to have to blow the gaff; but ye know the old saying, that charity begins at home. Ye must sell your knowledge at the best market."

Girdlestone thought intently for a minute or two, with his great eyebrows drawn down over his little restless eyes. "You said to my son," he remarked at last, "that you were too honourable to embark in our undertaking. Do you consider it honourable to make use of knowledge gained in confidence for the purpose of extorting money?"

"Me dear sir," answered the major, holding up his hand and deprecatingly, "ye put me in the painful position of having to explain myself in plain words. If I saw a man about to do a murder, I should think nothing of murdering him. If I saw a pickpocket at work I'd pick his pocket, and

think it good fun to do it. Now this little business of yours is—well, well, I say unusual, and if what I do seems a little unusual, too, it's to be excused. Ye can't throw stones at every one, me boy, and then be surprised when some one throws one at ye. Ye bite the diamond holder, d'ye see, and I take a little nibble at ye. It's all fair enough."

The merchant reflected again for some moments. "Suppose we agree to purchasing your silence at this price," he said, "what guarantee have we that you will not come and extort more money, or that you may not betray our secret after all?"

"The honour of a soldier and a gentleman," answered the major, rising and tapping his chest with two fingers of his right hand.

A slight sneer played over Girdlestone's pale face, but he made no remark. "We are in your power," he said, "and have no resource but to submit to your terms. You said five hundred pounds?"

"A thousand," the major answered, cheerfully. "It's a great sum of money."

"Deuce of a lot!" said the veteran cordially. "Well, you shall have it. I will communicate with you," Girdlestone rose as if to terminate the interview.

The major made no remark, but he showed his white teeth again, and tapped Mr. Girdlestone's cheque-book with the silver head of his walking-stick.

"What! Now?"

"Yes, now."

The two looked at each other for a moment and the merchant sat down again and scribbled out a cheque, which he tossed to his companion. The latter looked it over carefully, took a fat little pocket-book from the depths of his breast pocket, and having placed the precious slip of paper in it, laboriously pushed it back into its receptacle.

Then he very slowly and methodically picked up his jaunty curly-brimmed hat and shining kid gloves, and with a cheery nod to his companion, who answered it with a scowl, he swaggered off into the counting-house proper, but minus the white Tom, whom he had known for some months, and having made three successive offers—one to stand immediately an unlimited quantity of champagne, a second to play him five hundred up for anything he would name, and a third to lay a tanner for him at 7 to 4 on Amelia for the Oaks—all of which offers were declined with thanks, he bowed himself out, leaving a vague memory of his smile, alert cellar, and gaiters in the minds of the awe-struck clerk.

Whatever an impartial judge might think of the means whereby Major Tobias Clutterbuck had successfully screwed a thousand pounds out of the firm of Girdlestone, it is quite certain that that gentleman's seasoned conscience did not reproach him in the least degree. On the contrary, his whole being seemed saturated and impregnated with the wildest hilarity and delight. Twice in less than a hundred yards he was compelled to stop and lean upon a post owing to the breathlessness which supervened upon his attempts to make another of the delighted chuckles which came surging up from the inmost recesses of his capacious frame. At the second halt he wriggled his hand inside his tight-breasted coat, and after as many contortions as though he were about to shed that garment as a snake does its skin, he produced once more the little fat pocket-book.

From it he extracted the cheque and looked it over lovingly. Then he hailed a passing hansom, "Drive to the Capital and Counties Bank," he said. It had struck him that since the firm was in a shaky state he had better draw the money as soon as possible.

In the bank a gloomy-looking cashier took the cheque and stared at it somewhat longer than the occasion seemed to demand. It was but a few minutes, yet it appeared a very long time to the major.

"How will you have it?" he asked at last in a mournful voice. It tends to make a man cynical when he spends his days in handling untold riches while his wife and six children are struggling to make both ends meet at home.

"A hundred in gold and the rest in notes," said the major, with a sigh of relief.

The cashier counted and handed over a thick packet of crisp new paper and a little pile of shining sovereigns. The major stored away the first in the pocket-book and the latter in his trousers pockets. Then he swaggered out with a great increase of pomposity and importance, and ordered his cabman to drive to Kennedy-place.

Von Baumer was sitting in the major's campaigning chair, smoking his china-bowled pipe and gazing dreamily at the long blue wall. Time had been passing with the comrades of late, as the German's steady appearance sufficiently testified. His friends in Germany had ceased to forward his small remittance, and Eckermann's office, in which he had been employed, had given him notice that for a time they could dispense with his services. He had been spending the whole afternoon in perusing the long list of "wants" in the Daily Telegraph, and his ink-stained fingers showed the perseverance with which he had been answering every advertisement that could possibly apply to him. A pile of addressed envelopes lay upon the table, and it was only the uncertainty of his finances and the fact that the humble penny stamp mounts into shillings when frequently employed, that prevented him from increasing the number of his applications. He looked up and started at a word of casual greeting as a companion came striding in.

"Get out of this," the major said abruptly. "Get away into the bed-room."

"Potztausend! Vor is it then?" cried the astonished Teuton.

"Out with ye! I want this room to myself."

Von Baumer shrugged his shoulders and lumbered off like a good-natured plantigrade, closing the door behind him.

When a companion had disappeared the major proceeded to lay out all his notes upon the table, overlapping each other, but still so arranged that every separate one was visible. He then built in the centre ten little golden columns in a circle, each consisting of ten sovereigns, until the whole presented the appearance of a metallic Stonehenge upon a plain of bank notes. This done, he crossed his head, and contemplated his little arrangement with much pride and satisfaction.

Solitary delight soon becomes wearisome, however, so the veteran summoned his companion. The Teuton was so dumb-founded by this display of wealth, that he was bereft for a time of all faculty of speech, and could only stare open-mouthed at the table. At last he extended a forefinger and thumb and rubbed a five-pound note between them, as though to convince himself of its reality, after which he began to grate round the table in a sort of war dance, never taking his eyes from the heap of affluence in front of him. "Mein Gott!" he exclaimed, "Guldiger vater! Ach himmel! Was fur ein Schatzel! Donner wetter! Und a thousand other uncouth expressions of satisfaction and amazement."

When the old soldier had sufficiently enjoyed the lively emotion which showed itself on every feature of the German's countenance, he picked up the notes and locked them in his desk, together with half the gold. The other fifty pounds he returned into his pocket.

"Come on!" he said to his companion, abruptly.

"Come where? What is it?"

"Come on!" roared the major, irascibly. "What d'ye want to stand asking questions for? Put on your hat and come."

The major had retained the cab at the door, and the two jumped into it. "Drive to Verdi's Restaurant," he said to the driver.

When they arrived at that aristocratic and expensive establishment, the soldier ordered the best dinner for two that money could procure. "Have a ready in two hours sharp," he said to the manager. "None of your half-and-half wines, mind! We want the real thing, and be Gad! we can tell the difference."

Having left the manager much impressed, the two friends set out for a ready-made clothing establishment. "I won't come in," the major said, slipping ten sovereigns into Von Baumer's hand. "Just ye go in and tell them ye want the

best suit of clothes they can give ye. They're a good selection there, I know."

"Gott in Himmel!" cried the amazed German. "But, my dear friend, you cannot wait in the street. Come in with me."

"No, I'll wait," the old soldier answered. "They might think I was paying for the clothes if I came in."

"Well, but so you—"

"Eh, would ye?" roared the major, raising his cane, and Von Baumer disappeared precipitately into the shop. When he emerged once more at the end of twenty minutes, he was attired in an elegant and close-fitting suit of heather tweed. The pair then made successive visits to a shoemaker, a hatter, and a draper, with the result that Von Baumer developed patent leather boots, a jaunty brown hat, and a pair of light yellow gloves. By the end of their walk there seemed nothing left of the original Von Baumer except a tawny beard, and an expression of hopeless and overpowering astonishment.

Having effected this transformation, the friends retraced their steps to Verdi's and did full justice to the spread awaiting them, after which the old soldier, upon the heart of the establishment being stowing luggage upon every one who came in his way. As to the further

WOMAN.

Catherine Kelly, 22 years of age, was charged in Salford with violently assaulting an old woman named Margaret Clancey.—The prisoner, Clancey occupied a room in a small house in Salford, and a few nights ago Kelly went home much worse for drink. Without the slightest provocation she commenced a brutal attack on the woman, dragging her about the room by the hair, and eventually tried to force her head into the fire. She succeeded in getting the prosecu-
tor's head under the firebrass, when the woman, in a fit of rage, fled into the room above, and he prevented the prisoner using further violence.—On the magistrate asking what was his opinion against the prisoner, Mr. Superintendent Hargrave said she was a very bad character indeed, and had been fourteen times convicted in Manchester and seven times in Salford, chiefly for drunkenness.—The stipendiary said the prisoner was extremely very dangerous to woman, and he sentenced her to six months' imprisonment, and hard labour.

All communications are treated in private and
Note.—All in search of health should wear one of Harross
Electropathic Belts. Guaranteed genuine. Pamphlet free on
application.

A CONVICT'S ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE

WHAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DO

DR. LALOR'S PHOSPHODYNE
LABORATORY, HAMPSTEAD, LONDON N

THE BEST OF EARTH.—Ladies are the BEST JUDGES OF THE BEST, and in spite of allotments of low PRICES, and consequently low QUALITY, will have the BEST TEA. This has for sixty years been shown by their always preferring HORSBURN'S TEA. Purest, Strongest, Cheapest, and Best. "ALWAYS GOLD ALIKE." Sold ONLY secured in PACKETS, by 400 Confectioners in London, and 4,000 Chemists in the Country.—(Advertisement.)

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.
ST. JAMES'S GREAT HALL.

REGENT-STREET AND PICCADILLY.
ON BOXING DAY, THURSDAY, December 26th,
The
FOORE AND BURGESS MINSTRELS
WHO BROKE IN THE GREAT HALL.
With
ENTIRELY NEW AND GIGANTIC
HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT.
which has been in the preparation for several weeks past,
one which the management confidently anticipate will
surpass all their previous efforts.
The First Two Performances will take place
ON BOXING DAY, at 2 1/2,
and
BOXING NIGHT, at 7 1/2;
and after Boxing Day will be continued throughout the
Christmas and New Year's holidays.
EVERY AFTERNOON at 2 1/2,
and
EVERY NIGHT at 7 1/2.
FIVE THOUSAND SEATS.
Tickets for all parts of the Hall and Reserved Seats can now
be secured at Hall's Trustees' Office, No. James's Hall. For
convenience of the public, the Trustees have also secured
Extra and Reserved Seats can now be secured by post if a Postal
note for the amount of tickets required, together with an
address to which the tickets may be sent, be forwarded to the
Trustees' Office, No. James's Hall.

ST. JAMES'S HALL, PICCADILLY.
ST. JAMES'S GRAND HALL,
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S HOLICARS.
'DORE AND BURGESS' MINSTRELS'
TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL HOLIDAY
ENTERTAINMENT
Will be produced on
BOXING DAY, THURSDAY, December 28th,
On which occasion the
AFTERNOON PERFORMANCE
WILL COMMENCE at 2.30.
And the
EVENING PERFORMANCE at 7.15.
On each successive Day and Night throughout the Holidays
Day Performances will commence at 2.30 and the Evening
Performances at 7.15.
On Boxing Day the Doors will be opened
at 1.30.
FIVE THOUSAND SEATS.
Tuesdell, &c.; Sofa Seals, &c.; Balcony, &c.; Grand
Aree and Boxes.
No Fee. No Charge for Programmes.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS.
ST. JAMES'S GREAT HALL.

SCORE AND BURGESS MINSTRELS'
NEW AND GLORIOUS HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT.

EVERY NIGHT at 8.0.
The performance will commence 8.0, when the Day Performance will commence 10.0, and the Evening Performance at 7.0.

ST. JAMES'S GRAND HALL.
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.
NOTE THE MANY BRILLIANT FEATURES.

SCORE AND BURGESS MINSTRELS'
GIANTIC HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT.

As appears in the program, the Band Performers in the world, Mr. C. P. SHORTIS.

Production of two extremely new and screamingly funny farces, THE FOUR FROM THE GREEN, and BANG! BANG! BANG! A CLEEK, in which those popular comedians—Gene Stratton, S. MacFarr, Tom Birchmore, Pete Dwight, and Kenelm—will appear.

First time of a new spectacular

MILITARY DANCE.
 rang by Mr. W. W. Moore, in which all the members of the
 Company will appear.
 first time, too, of all the following new and delightful songs:
 "Madeline," "The Soldier's Girl," "The Girl With All Her Fancie,"
 "The Soldier of the Wall," "The Dutch Girl," "Sleep, My Babe,"
 "My Niece," "The Old Settler," "Dreaming as the blumbers,"
 and an entirely new song, "The Soldier's Girl," arranged by
 Mons. Clodon.
 which the marvelous Male Soprano, Minor Benedetto, and
 the full orchestra will perform.
MAGNIFICENT CHOIR OF VOCALISTS,
 assisted by the
FULL ORCHESTRA
 will appear.
LIVE THOUSAND SEATS
PERFORMANCE OF THE ENTIRE EVENING
THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS.

ST. JAMES'S GRAND HALL.
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS
PERFORMING DAVID LIVINGSTON,
 that universally-renowned comedian,
B. O. W. MOORE
 will sing for the first time
ENTIRELY NEW AND ORIGINAL COMIC SONGS.

entitled
"IN MY DREAMS I HEAR THOSE BELLS,"
 will allude to an entirely new Budget of side-splitting
 jokes in the First Part, in the telling of which his reputation
 has extended throughout the world.
 Doors open at 8 and 9 o'clock.
 All other days at 2.0 and 7.0.

BARNUM'S CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
 AND SPLENDOURS AT OLYMPIA.
OTHELLO AND BRILLIANT CHANGES, BEGINNING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 26th.
STUNNING AND SENSATIONAL.
 including most Gaiety, Extensive, Magnificent, and Varied
 Additions to
THE REPERTOIRE.
 Unparalleled, Imperial, Triumphant,
NEW, OR THE DESTRUCTION OF ROME.
 MYSTERIOUSLY Pronounced the most wonderful
 Captivated and Enraptured Spectators utter the most
 tremendous and Glorious Dramatic, Pantomimic, Terpi-
 stic, Musical, Classic, and scenic scene since Ever Per-
 formed.

THE TWELVE UNITED GREATEST SHOWS ON
ARTHUR - A BATTLE OF THE GIANTS. A Grati-
 fication of Wild Savage Beasts. The Omaha College of the

[illegible]

ra of the house at half-price except in shilling sale. Afternoon Performances most desirable for Ladies and Children, as they are especially adapted to the tastes of the fairer sex.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.—THREE EQUALLY COMPLETE, PERFECT, AND SUPERB EXHIBITIONS

BOOKING DAY, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18th. Doors open at 10 a.m., 12.5 noon, and 6 p.m.

NAGARA
IN
LONDON.
THIS YEAR.
Nearly
One Million
Visitors.

GREAT PICTURE OF THE
COLORFUL FALLS.
Original Exhibits by the Niagara Falls. Pleasant Lounge, Music, Niagara Improved Sweetmeats, Chops, Lambchops and Teas. Electric Light, Electric Fan, Electric Warmers. Admission, 1s.; No Fees. 10.5 to 12.5.

YORK-STERLING, WESTMINSTER
(St. James' Park Station).

NOTICE.—SUBTERRANEAN FAIRY FOREST OF CHRISTMAS TREES. Free Gifts to Children. No Extra Charge.

ROYAL AQUARIUM.
GREAT HOLIDAY PROGRAMME.—Performing Elephants, just arrived from the Continent; Menotti, on the

the Hippodrome, the Regal Acrobatic Aquariats, the Athos Troupe,
 the Brothers Beiko and their Dunksy, the Four Gays and Peppor,
 the Le Pervier, the Four Brothers, the Four Brothers, the Four
 Pettie Bertoto, and Mr. Kelton Treuman. A mission, too
 of selling Children, Silence, Horee open, until 11 a.
 m. on Monday Day to 10 p. m. on Tuesday may be obtained.
 POOL AQUARIUM.—BOXING DAY.—Dr. Carver will
 be Niboot in the Theatre. "Carmen," the Celebrated Picture
 (the Nude), and the Canibals from Terra Del Pungo will
 on view all day. The Beckwith's Swimming Entertainment
 will be on view all day.
 POOL AQUARIUM.—Last Two Days of the "Big Dumb"
 Swimming Race on the Back, To-morrow and Tuesday.
 Various Beckwith's, Champion of London v. D. Dalton,
 Champion of the World, 1000 yds. each day. Afternoon, 5 to 10
 p. m.; Evening, 8 to 11 p. m.
 THE HANOVER ROOMS,
 140, LEAD STREET, ROBERT STREET.
 CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS.
 CHRISTMAS EVE, BOXING NIGHT, and NEW YEAR'S
 LES PETIT BAIS.
 People's Ball, Twelfth Night, Pickles, &c.

ARMOURERS AND BRASERS' COMPANY.—EXHIBITION OF BRASS WORK, BLANKS, CUTLASSES, &c.
 10,000 in Prizes offered to British Craftsmen and Apprentices.
 CERTIFICATES to Designers and Manufacturers.
 The Company of Armourers and Brasers will hold, in their
 Hall, in Finsbury, from the 11th to the 13th inst. (inclusive), an EXHIBITION comprising the following classes
 of work by British craftsmen:—
 Designs, Models, Castings, Brassing, Chasing,
 Hammered Ware, Repoussé, Engraving, Instrumental,
 Massecutting, Nibbs, Brooming, Spun Ware, Swords, Sargates,
 and all other articles of brass.
 All particulars of prizes, awards, conditions, &c., may be
 obtained on application, by letter only, to
 Messrs. H. & J. COLEMAN, 10, FINSBURY, LONDON, E.C. 2.
 10th November, 1889.

A CLERICAL CRIMINAL,
Remarkable Disclosures.

Remarkable Disclosures.

According to a Paris correspondent, a notorious clerical criminal is being tried at the **Aveyron Assizes**. He is a priest with the altogether inappropriate name of **Toussaint Boudes**, and his crimes have been so numerous and peculiar that doubts have arisen as to his sanity. Boudes is now fifty-seven years old, and was born of humble parents at Thone, a village in the south of France, the seat of the episcopate of **Perigueux**. He distinguished himself there at an early age not by his talents for study, but for thieving. His petty larcenies having been discovered, Boudes was expelled, and sought refuge in a monastery of Italian priests, whose language he learned. He had, however, to leave his place owing to his immoral conduct, and he wandered along the coast of the Central Sea until he fell in with the unsusppecting Bishop of Castellamare, who, enchanted by the fellow's apparent evangelical meekness and piety, ordained him. Boudes, as a priest, turned up at Marseilles, where he acted as a kind of secretary to the famous preacher whose sermons he had been listening to. He was then sent to his native department with them. His stolon pulpit thunder gained him fame in the region, and he was appointed vicar of **Lezarde** in the parish priest there. The **Abbe de Moncausse** The evangelical Boudes at once began to covet the post of curé for himself, and he set to work to obtain promotion by endeavouring to

Poison the Parish Priest.
To this intent he put sedative water and some chloro-hydrate of morphine in the Abbé Moncaum's white wine, but the tragedy was seen through, for the Abbé was liked by his parishioners, and the Abbé's wine was muddy, had it examined by a chemist. M. Moncaum had every proof that his vicar intended to get him out of the world, but in order to avoid a scandal he said nothing about the matter, and asked the chemist to help him keep the terrible secret. Shortly afterwards Boudes was removed to the town of Vieux where he pilfered and drank, and the vicar, the man whom he visited, besides the signs of a still more revolting nature, acted under the guise of almsgiving, lent out money at usurious interest. Boudes was last suspended by his bishop, and was about to be arrested when he disappeared, eventually turning up in a monastery, where he pretended to be repentant. From this place he was taken by the police, and in addition to the charges against him, he was also accused of having murdered the Abbé Abbar, a priest of Saint-Girg, who was frantically beaten and strangled by some person or persons, who plundered his house after having committed the deed. Boudes was tried at Montpeir, but the doctors having declared that he was not responsible for his actions, he was put into an asylum whence he escaped. Under a false name, he worked for a while as a farm labourer, then he took the place as teacher in a village school, where he finally met the aunt of the friends of a very elderly lady, whom he had eased of a large sum of money, after having captured her confidence. When in arrest the wicked Boudes was recognized and identified. He, however, solemnly protested that he will be able to prove his innocence.

A JUDGE ON MOONLIGHTING.

Mr. Justice Murphy, in charging the grand jury at the Munster circuit in Ireland, said there was now only one country in Ireland where moonlighting was very prominent. It was an appalling state of things, and a country would be scarcely to live in where a poorer or humbler man, a farmer or labourer, after he retired to his house at night could not be as well protected as a gentleman. In the strong and well-built slated house. In these prosecutions it did not appear that any of these moonlighting outrages were made on the houses of the gentry. Why, he asked, if the gentry were able to supply themselves with arms, fire or three persons could be armed inwardly if not outwardly, and there was any cause to apprehend danger, and if a rang broke into such a class house, there would be a likelihood of possible identification by the shooting of those concerned in the outrages on the spot. That this trouble was committed on Scanlan there could be no doubt and nobody could imagine a greater state of savagery than was manifested in the present case. It was a deplorable state of affairs, and it was in Scanlan's house that could be produced to assist prosecution, except himself, and that no doubt would to the state of terror prevailing in the district. He should ask them, as jurymen, to endeavor to put a stop to such a terrible disease as that which existed in Kerry.

MR. PARNELL AND MR. GLADSTONE.
Mr. Parnell left Hawarden on Thursday afternoon, having during the morning held a conference with Mr. Gladstone. He travelled to the Spital Station, where he was met by the Hon. Mr. Evans, m.p., whose guest he will be during his stay in the neighbourhood. Subsequently he proceeded to Liverpool, and was presented with an address of welcome on behalf of twenty-two branches of the local National League.

MR. BALFOUR AND THE ALLEGED "BLOOD TAX."

Mr. Balfour has promptly replied to Mr. Bro, M. P., who called his attention to a statement by Lord Wolverton, to the effect that a "blood tax" is levied in Ireland in the case of agricultural classes. Mr. Bro. Balfour says:— "Agricultural classes are as rich as to be almost, if not unmitigable. Certainly no such law now in Ireland, but a so-called 'blood tax' was in use under Mr. Gladstone's stringent Coercion Act. Lord Spencer made very ample use of the Government in that respect, and the Government are not likely to do any such power."

MR. GOSCHEN ON LIGHT GOLD. Mr. Goschen has sent to the press a letter in which he is intended to remove existing anxiety of subject of the re-coining of light gold. The colonies that the issue of half-sovereigns has stopped, and says that they are still being factured, but not on the same scale as for this step, says Mr. Goschen, has not been taken with any reference to the metal used, but because the gold has, it is admitted, been a circulation of silver, but this resulted from representations on the part of bankers, who complained that they could not get enough silver. For convenience, it is urged, is placed upon the earning classes by the issue of silver coins, half-sovereigns, and the replacement of the tardation of the gold coinage is in any way affected by the issue of half-sovereigns.

THE SALFORD CATTLE BOYCOTT CASE.

A WOMAN BURNED TO DEATH
A shocking death from burning has happened to a widow named Mary Vale, of Tailem Dunnhow. She was cooking at the kitchen when her dress caught fire, and she died immediately enveloped in flames. She rushed the street screaming for help, and some boys came to her aid, but she died a few hours afterwards.

At the Kent Assizes on Saturday, Mr. Denman sentenced Henry Charles Claiborne, a tobaccoist at Canterbury, to ten years' imprisonment for setting fire to some twelve shops with intent to burn down his shop thereby defraud the Norwich Insurance



LAST WEEK'S POLICE.

Guildhall.

ALLEGED EMBROIDERY BY A TRAVELLER.—Alfred Thorpe Porter, 37, was charged with embroidering various sums of money belonging to his employers, Messrs. Thomas Bayley and Co., leather trimmers of Snow Hill. The prisoner was employed by the prosecutors as a traveller. On the 7th October last he absconded, and it was alleged that he had embroidered two cheques, one for £243s. 4d., and one for £125s. 3d. It was also stated that he had stolen the sum of £119 18s. 3d. in money. Detective-sergeant Oldhamstead said he received a warrant for the arrest of the prisoner. After tracing him through France, he eventually arrested him in Marseilles. He saw the prisoner with a warrant for your arrest, charging you with embroidering money belonging to your employers. The prisoner read the warrant, and said, "It's quite right. I will give you no trouble." Witness conveyed him to London. When searched £215s. 3d. was found on him. The prisoner was remanded.

Marlborough-street.

LIVELY SCENE IN OXFORD-STREET.—Kate Chaplin, described as homeless, was charged with being drunk in Oxford-street at half-past four o'clock on Friday afternoon. The prisoner's face was bruised and battered, and sundry marks were covered with court plaster. Her hair was matted, and her hat and costume were dirty and disordered. She entered a shop, fopped down into a chair, stared wildly about her, hiccupped, and gave an order which none of the assistants could understand. As she refused to leave, Police-constable 222 D was called to eject her. He found her very drunk. When he tried to persuade her to go, as a lady ought to do, she cooked up her nose, called him a fellow, and positively refused to budge an inch. Consequently he had to use force to put her into the street. No sooner had she gained the pavement, than she staggered into another shop, and took her seat amongst a crowd of ladies. When the constable was again called upon, she clung persistently to the chair, and he had to carry her chair and all to the door. Directly he got her outside she entered a third shop, and then squealed like a pig, and created such an uproar that all the customers left. She was ejected, and once more she made for a fourth shop, but the constable took her to the station. The next morning she was very calm and collected, and expressed her sorrow for having so misbehaved herself. The truth was that her cabman robbed her, and afterwards some one drugged her. Mr. Newton: Where do you live? Prisoner (hesitatingly): Westbourne Park Gardens. Mr. Newton let her off with a fine of half-a-crown.

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE SERPENTINE.—Mary Austin, a woman of about 40 years of age, of Charles-street, Lissington, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. Police-constable 407 A said that at about 10 o'clock that morning he was near the east bridge of the Serpentine, when he saw the prisoner run down the south shore, throw up her arms and leap into the water. He hastened towards the spot, but before he arrived there a Mr. Joseph Marsh, of Marsh-street, Finsbury, had waded out and brought her back to shore. She was taken to the Royal Humane Society's receiving-house, where a doctor saw her, and then conveyed to the police station. Her only explanation of her conduct was that she was tired of life. In reply to the magistrate, the woman said she had been in great trouble lately on account of her husband's being out of work, which had necessitated the selling of their home. A brother of the prisoner said that for three days his sister had been staying at his house. On that morning, during breakfast, she was suddenly missed from the table. While she was being searched for a notice was received from the police that she was in custody. Mr. Newton remanded her for a week in order that the chaplain of the House of Detention might see her.

Thames.

EXTRAORDINARY CHARGE OF PERJURY.—Charles Feeley, 21, a labourer of 235, St. George's-street, St. George's, was charged with perjury. A warrant, returned with having upon the hearing of a charge of felony against Edward Hyde and Walter Whaley, to wit, a charge against them of having, on the 15th July last, stolen the sum of £4 10s., the property of George Hewitt, committed wilful perjury. Mr. Matthews prosecuted on behalf of the Treasury, and Detective-inspector Roots watched the case for the police. In opening the case, Mr. Matthews stated that on the 23rd of July last, two men named Hyde and Whaley, were arrested on the information of the prisoner, and on his sole information, and on the 3rd of August two other men, named Brooks and Brady, were arrested on the information of other persons. The four men were brought before the magistrate, charged with being concerned together in stealing, on the 15th of July, £4 10s. from the Duke of Kent public house, Dean-street, Shadwell, and it was alleged that while they remained outside the house, while the other two went inside and committed the robbery. They were remanded, and on the 9th of August the four men were tried at the North London Sessions, convicted, and sentenced—Hyde, Brooks, and Brady to five years' penal servitude, and Whaley to eighteen months' imprisonment. When arrested, all three of the men swore that these men protested their innocence. Brady sent a letter to some of his relatives, in which he not only denied the charge, but gave the names of the actual perpetrators of the robbery. That letter was handed to the police, but in some way it got mislaid and did not receive attention. After the conviction the Home Secretary was memorialised on behalf of Hyde, Brooks, and Brady, and an investigation was ordered to be made. That investigation was entrusted to Inspector Roots, who discovered the four men who planned and committed the robbery at the Duke of Kent. The names of those men were Richard Shaw, James Porter, Edwin Price, and John Jeffries Shaw and Porter committed the robbery, while the others watched outside. When they got the money Shaw and Porter made off, but Shaw had a struggle with the burglar who had the money. About ten o'clock they were met by Thos. Phillips and Patrick Feeley, brother of the accused. They breakfasted together, and went into a public house. Shaw paid for all that was had and communicated to Phillips and Feeley certain information as to where they got the money, and gave them each 2s. 6d. They then parted, and Phillips and Patrick Feeley met the accused, to whom they told what had happened. On the 23rd of July the accused spoke to Sergeant Adams and said he knew who committed the robbery. He said he saw Hyde and Whaley running and followed him. They treated him and told him they had got some money from the Duke of Kent and gave him 2s. Hyde and Whaley were arrested and the accused, when they were before the magistrate, repeated on oath what he had told the sergeant. He also swore he had no spite against Hyde. He (Mr. Matthews) should be able to prove that at the time Feeley alleged that he saw Hyde and Whaley, they were at other places. He should also prove that he did have a spite against Hyde. Several witnesses, one of them being one of the men who were concerned in the robbery, would be called to prove the case, and he (Mr. Matthews) should ask for the prisoner to be committed for trial. Some evidence having been given, accused was remanded.

ALLEGED VIOLENT ASSAULT ON A SON.—Augusta Haas was charged with violently assaulting her son, George Haas, who was unable to attend the court in consequence of the injuries he had received. Charles Roberts, 225 K, said that on Friday afternoon he was called to take the prisoner into custody on a charge of assaulting her son, John Haas, by striking him on the head with a boot brush, and on the way the state of the said her husband came home and was knocking

her about with a chair, and broke it over her head. In self-defence she took up a brush and threw it at her husband, but it struck her boy. She did not mean it for him, but for her husband. In answer to Mr. Roberts, chief clerk, the witness said the son complained of his mother striking him over the head with a brush, and he had a wound on the top of his head an inch in length. He saw a broken chair, and the prisoner had two large lumps on her head. Mr. Lushington bound the prisoner over to appear and answer the charge in a week's time.

West London.

THE LAW OF DISTRESS.—An application was made by a shopkeeper as to whether he was bound to pay expenses for a broker's man when he was ready to pay the rent due. He stated that he had been in the habit of paying one quarter under the other. The broker came in, and applied for the money. The shopkeeper said that the broker was not bound to accept a cheque. The applicant said he obtained cash for the cheque and paid the rent, but the broker charged 7s. 6d. expenses, 4s. 6d. being for the man. He was not in the house a quarter of an hour. Mr. Curtis Bennett explained to the applicant that in law a day could not be divided. There could not be part of a day. The broker could not charge any more if the man was in possession all day. The applicant: I told him the money was ready. Mr. Curtis Bennett: You were not ready. The applicant also said that the broker went into the parlour without his authority. Mr. Curtis Bennett told him that the broker went into the parlour to levy the distress. Putting a hand on a chair was sufficient. The applicant said he was informed that the broker was entitled to charge the expenses. Mr. Curtis Bennett said the broker was quite right. A cheque was not money. The applicant was obliged to pay it in the exact coin. There was sometimes "many a slip between the cup and the lip" (laughter). The applicant had no redress.

A ROBBERY ENDING IN MARRIAGE.—Harriet Arnold, a tall, good-looking young woman, who was described as head housemaid at 61, Philbeach Gardens, Kensington, was brought up for re-examination on a charge of stealing a purse, containing £17 10s., belonging to a young lady named Edith Lillian Ross, and two sums of money the property of her mistress, Miss Lucy Fanny King. It appeared that the prisoner was only in the service of the prosecutrix a few days, the purse being missed on the Thursday after entering the house on the Wednesday previously. The other money was missed on the following day, and on Saturday last, when the police were called in, the prisoner strongly protested her innocence, and succeeded in getting the other servants should be searched. That was acted upon, and the purse with all the money was found in her possession. She then fell down in a fainting fit, and on recovering she admitted taking the money, and asked to be forgiven. She was, however, charged and remanded, with a view of sending her to a home, as she had previously borne a good character. A young man, who was in service at Earl's Lodge, where the prisoner was discharged, said she was engaged to be married to the prisoner. He had published the banns and was willing to marry her, notwithstanding what had happened. The magistrate elicited from the young man that the banns were published at a church in the country. Mr. Curtis Bennett pointed out to him that he would have to publish the banns also in a church in Earl's Lodge, where the prisoner was discharged, and purchase a license. The he had been reading, or perhaps he intended to enter into recognisances to bring her up for judgment if required.

Westminster.

CHARGE OF STEALING FROM THE ARMY AND NAVY STORES.—Anna Bokhoven, 41, a foreign governess, giving an address at Sydenham, was charged with stealing fur collarettes, and other property from the Army and Navy Stores, Victoria, Westminster. On Friday afternoon, Mr. Aitchison, of the managers' department at the stores, had his attention directed to the prisoner in the drapery department, and special observation was kept on her. She was seen to cover some fur articles with her mackintosh, and was then detained and questioned. She asserted that she had purchased the articles; but this was negatived, and she was given into custody. On the way to the station she dropped a box of chocolates and other goods from beneath her dress. The female searcher found that she had large alpaca pockets—not in her dress, but tied with tape, on the left side and in front of her underskirt. The prisoner told the magistrate that it was not unusual for ladies on the Continent to have pockets in this form. Mr. D'Eyncourt remanded her in custody.

A FRENCHMAN'S PERFORMANCE OF THE FRENCH WRESTLERS.—Andre La Caisse, the chief of the wrestlers engaged at the Royal Aquarium, Westminster, was charged on a summons, before Mr. D'Eyncourt, with assaulting and threatening Felix Bernard, another wrestler (engaged by him in Paris), in the managing director's office of the Aquarium, on Tuesday morning. Mr. A. de Gello, later, previously convicted, complained, a Frenchman of Herculean proportions, deposed that the defendant under their agreement owed him about 1,000 francs, and on Tuesday morning he went to La Caisse and asked for a few hundred francs on account. The defendant replied that he would pay him with his list, and using abusive and insulting language he gradually approached him, and unexpectedly dealt him a tremendous blow in the face, which produced a severe laceration of the nose to spit blood. La Caisse then told him in French that if he asked again for money he would rip him open with a knife. Louis Elmi, professionally known as "Apollon," said he saw complainant go to the office to ask for the money, which he said was owing to him, and returned shortly afterwards spitting blood, the evident result of a blow. For the defence, Captain Moleworth, the chairman of the Aquarium, deposed that he was discussing business matters with La Caisse and an agent, when Bernard entered the office and commenced an altercation. The Frenchmen became very excited, very strong language was used, and both men "put up their hands." La Caisse retreated to avoid a conflict, and when he could retreat no further he gave Bernard a push. Witness really could not say whether it was with his hand, but he certainly saw the complainant's manner was provoking and menacing. Bernard then rushed out of the room and brought up Apollon. Mr. D'Eyncourt: Then M. La Caisse was driven into the corner. Witness: Yes. And I thought that what he did was done in self-defence. This man (complainant) is immensely strong and is one of the most powerful wrestlers in the world. Mr. D'Eyncourt: Both appear to be men of great strength. Mr. James P. Gervill, Hyatt, dramatic agent, of Duke-street, St. James's, said he negotiated the engagement of the wrestlers, and was in Captain Moleworth's office discussing business matters with La Caisse, when Bernard entered uninvited. Bernard's manner was offensive, and that it was proved that his attitude and conduct were such as to justify La Caisse in pushing him away, and it was almost impossible to measure the degree of force to be used on such an occasion. He dismissed the summons.

FALSIFICATION OF ACCOUNTS.—Robert Henderson Armstrong, a young man, who gave himself up to the police at Edinburgh, was charged before Mr. D'Eyncourt with obtaining by false pretences, Messrs. Harvey, Nicholson, and Co., drapers of Kingsbridge, the prisoner, who was stated to be well connected and a native of Hoxton, in Roxburghshire, was paid at the rate of £39 a year by the prosecutors, with board and lodging and premiums. Their manager stated that for a considerable time he had been suspected of dishonest practices, but he was not detected until, last year, when a customer purchasing gloves to the value of £5 10s., had given him one for that amount, while the glove which should have been a duplicate was made out for 10s. only. When this

fraud was discovered prisoner absconded, and he told the detective who brought him to London that he had been wandering about the country, and that he was grieved at what he had done. The prisoner, who seemed to feel his position acutely, was sentenced to three months' hard labour.

A WOMAN'S INGRATITUDE.—Honora Connell, of George-place, Vincent-street, Westminster, took a charwoman named Jane Peat in out of charity, as she was homeless and destitute. On the 21st ult. Mrs. Connell had occasion to go out, and on her return she found that Peat had damped with a jacket, with the theft of which she was now charged. Evidence was given that the garment was pledged the same day for 6s., and the prisoner spent the money in drink and then went to the Fulham-road workhouse. Mr. D'Eyncourt told the prisoner that her conduct was about as base and ungrateful as it was possible to be. He sentenced her to three months' hard labour.

INQUESTS.

SINGULAR DEATH AT BETHNAL GREEN.—Dr. Macdonald held an inquiry at the Vestry Hall, Bethnal Green, respecting the death of Edward Albert Merrick, aged 17, lately living at 30, Virginia-row. Caroline Merrick, the mother of the deceased, stated that deceased was taken ill on Tuesday with sickness. Witness afterwards found out that deceased had been smoking. On Wednesday he took him to a doctor, but deceased died in the evening. George Merrick, the father, stated that he had an older son in the Marines, and deceased about six weeks ago went to a gymnasium to practise, as he wanted to join the army like his brother. He told a cousin that he had to grow half an inch more, which he thought he could do by Christmas. Dr. Campbell deposed to the deceased being brought to him on Wednesday, complaining of pain in the side. He prescribed for him, but he was not informed of his death in the evening. Death was due to exhaustion followed by pneumonia. There was no trace of any injury. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

FOOTBALL FATALITY AT BROMLEY.—Mr. Wynne E. Harter held an inquiry at Bromley-by-Bow respecting the death of Thomas Dossett, aged 10, the son of a bricklayer's labourer, residing at 3, Chandbun-street, Bromley. Eliza Dossett, the mother, stated that on Tuesday, the 15th ult., deceased went to school as usual, and said that instead of having his dinner he would go out and play. He returned shortly after and complained of pain in his head, so witness put him to bed. On Wednesday morning he became delirious, and died at ten minutes past one. Charles Vize, 11 years of age, stated that he was at play with deceased at football, and was running up to the ball when deceased passed him, and he pushed him, and deceased falling hit his head on the back of his head. When he got up he exclaimed, "Oh my head!" Dr. Dunlop stated that the cause of death was meningitis set up by the injury to the head, and witness had no doubt but that deceased received the injury while at play. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

FATAL ACCIDENT IN THE CITY.—At St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Mr. Lancham inquired as to the cause of the death of Mary Brumby, aged 15, whose parents live at 22, Maidstone-street, W. 1. She died, we may say, by falling down a well, which was at the warehouse of Messrs. Benson and Sons, 123, Wood-street, City. James Dawley, watchman, in the employ of the firm, said on Wednesday night he was going upstairs, when he heard a thud, as of a heavy fall into the basement. He went down to see what was the matter, and saw the deceased lying in a pool of blood on the floor. Blood was flowing from her mouth and nostrils, and she appeared quite dead. He carried her to the hospital, where she died. Life was pronounced extinct. By the coroner she must have fallen 27ft., and the well was used to light the floors. Mr. Coly, house-urgeon, said the unfortunate girl was quite dead when he saw her. The skull was fractured and the brain badly lacerated. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

SUDDEN DEATH IN A BEERHOUSE.—Dr. G. Danford Thomas held an inquest at St. Paul's Church, London, on the body of William Humber, aged 51, a pavior, who expired suddenly at Somers Town on Wednesday morning. The widow of the deceased, residing at 5, Marks-row, Nottingham, stated that on Monday morning her husband left her and said he should be home again in the afternoon, but she did not see him afterwards alive. On Wednesday she received a telegram announcing his death, and came up to London. She then discovered that he had committed suicide by drinking to excess. He was employed by the Midland Railway Company, and travelled about. Other evidence showed that on Wednesday morning Humber, accompanied by a female, entered the private bar of the Joiners Arms beerhouse, and was subsequently found upon a seat in a dying condition. Dr. Thurston said that death was due to the rupture of a large blood-vessel leading from the heart. There were no indications of excess. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

FATAL FIGHT IN LONG ACRE.—Mr. John Troutbeck held a long-continued inquiry at St. Clement's Church, Vestry Hall, relative to the death of William O'Neill, aged 25, a printer's labourer, lately residing at 44, Little Wiltshire, Drury-lane, who expired in King's College Hospital from injuries alleged to have been received in a fight with a public house in Long Acre. Richard O'Neill, a printer, living in Stanhope-street, near Market, a brother of the deceased, stated that on Monday evening he was with him in the Freemasons' Arms, Long Acre. They had a good deal to drink. Deceased picked a quarrel with a man named Fitzpatrick, and up in witness going out of the house he found deceased lying on the ground in the midst of a crowd bleeding from the head. Witness did not know how the deceased came on the ground. There was no ill-feeling between Fitzpatrick and the deceased. The medical evidence showed that deceased died from the effect of a blow on the head, and the jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

SUSPICIOUS DEATH OF A GIRL AT BOW.—Dr. Macdonald, M.P., held an inquiry at Bow, touching the death of Emma Dove, aged 20, a single woman. Rose Challis, the wife of a labourer, living at 11, Devereux-street, stated that the deceased was her sister, and had lived with her for seven or eight weeks. On the 1st inst. witness noticed that she looked ill, but denied anything being amiss with her. On Monday, however, she was taken worse, and a doctor was sent for, but she expired the next day. Dr. Hamlin, of Tredgar-road, Bow, stated that when he was called the girl was very collapsed and in a dangerous condition. She died on Tuesday evening from inflammation of the stomach following an unlawful operation. The sister, recalled, said she did not know how the deceased was procured, and had never seen her taking physic. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

DROWNED IN A WATER TANK.—Mr. Cartbar held an inquest at Belyvedere on the body of Amos Ashbolt, aged 54, caretaker at the Picardy Board Schools, Belyvedere. From the evidence it appeared that deceased had been heard to speak of a cistern there as giving him a good deal of trouble in consequence of the pipes being too small for the rush of water, and that he had often to go up a ladder to stop the noise. On Wednesday a man's legs were seen sticking out of the cistern, as if he were leaning over into the tank, and an alarm was given. Mr. Waller, assistant-master, and another extricated the body, which was not quite cold, but life was extinct. Dr. Cane deposed that death was caused by suffocation from drowning. If the manhole had been secured by the rush of water, it might have been so small for the rush of water, and that he had often to go up a ladder to stop the noise. 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"THE PEOPLE" MIXTURE.

Mr. Chamberlain has had an attack of gout. There were 2,555 births and 1,733 deaths in London last week.

The infant victims of overlying in London last week numbered eighteen. There were 552 deaths in London last week from diseases of the respiratory organs.

Lord Randolph Churchill will not return from the continent until the middle of January. The was not a single fatal case of small-pox, typhus, or cholera in London last week.

Emin Pacha is now reported to be out of danger. Already the demand for Lord Tennyson's new volume amounts to close upon 10,000 copies.

Mr. Robert Browning will be buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey. The supply of water to London during November daily averaged the enormous quantity of 164,899,321 gallons.

There were fifty-five deaths due to violence in London last week. Fifty-four were attributable to accident or negligence. The metropolitan authorities had last month to supply no less than 12,043 more houses with water than they had in November of 1888.

The days of public execution in France appear to be numbered. A majority of a committee of the French Chamber is in favour of its abolition. Jessie McCallum, a Greenock girl, is alleged to have first cut the throat of her illegitimate child, and then to have torn its tongue out.

The Prince of Wales "has always approved" writes Sir Francis Knollys—"of the principle of appointing working men justices of the peace." In the name of the Queen, Colonel Euan-Smith has invested the Sultan of Zanzibar with the grand cross of St. Michael and St. George.

Three persons, a man, a woman, and a boy, were drowned in a canal in the Potteries district during the fog on the 14th inst. Joseph Turner, who was sentenced to death for the murder of his son at Alford, has been respited with a view to the commutation of his sentence to one of penal servitude for life.

Henry Cole has been found drowned in the Nottingham and Grantham Canal near Belvoir. It is supposed that he walked into the water as he was on his way home in the fog on the 14th inst.

During the eleven months of this year we have received into the United Kingdom 514,339 gallons of Italian wine—15,875 gallons more than last year.

While John Veith, a Peebles carter, was leaping off a dyke his feet caught in a wire, and he was pitched violently to the ground and broke his neck.

Thirty London victims of measles died last week: twenty of scarlet fever, thirty-five of diphtheria, forty-nine of whooping-cough, fifteen of enteric fever, and fourteen of diarrhoea and dysentery.

By royal proclamation, published in the *Gazette*, Parliament is summoned to meet on Tuesday, February 11th, for the despatch of "divers urgent and important affairs."

It is announced from Lisbon that Lord Salisbury before deciding upon any line of action with regard to the alleged proceedings of Major Serpa Pinto in Eastern Equatorial Africa, will await information from British official sources.

A Liverpool labourer named Tracy was so exasperated by the drunken habits of his wife that he cut her throat and then his own. He was charged with wilful murder at the assizes. The jury found him guilty of manslaughter, and he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

The Court of Appeal, giving judgment in the St. Paul's rectory case, ruled that the court below had exceeded its power, and that the rule for a writ of mandamus against the Bishop of London ought not to have been made absolute. The appeal was therefore allowed, with costs.

The Swazi Queen Regent has proclaimed, by Mr. Shepstone's hand, her acceptance of the commissioners' proposals and authority. The Roman Dutch law, as administered in South Africa, is to be common law where the whites are concerned. The committee's charter remains unaltered.

At an inquest held on the body of Cator George Bees, a young man, who threw himself from Clifton Suspension Bridge the other night, it was stated that the deceased was the son of a wine merchant. He was of a most excitable temperament, and rather eccentric. A verdict of temporary insanity was returned.

The State apartments, the Albert Chapel, and the Round Tower at Windsor Castle, will be reopened to the public on the 26th, and be accessible to visitors every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday during the absence of the Court. The East Terrace, opposite the royal apartments, will be open on Saturday afternoons.

A strange incident has occurred in a church at Schopfheim, Baden. In the course of the sermon all the congregation, including the burgomaster of the town, suddenly rose and left the church, because the preacher was condemning in violent language the sinful ways of the parishioners. Before leaving, the burgomaster advised the preacher to "moderate himself."

Two children, a boy aged 3 and a girl aged 5 years, have lost their lives at Penclwun, near Swansea, through pouring paraffin oil on a fire which they had lighted in a room in their parents' house. The oil blazed out of the grate and set fire to the clothing of both children. Their father and mother named Bees, in attempting to extinguish the flames, were badly burned.

Lord Wolsey attended the annual meeting of the 3rd Kent (Royal Arsenal) Artillery Volunteers a few nights ago, and said that during the past two years a great and important advance had been made in the national defence by issuing field guns to corps of Volunteer Artillery. There were now sixty-seven batteries, armed with 208 guns, every one of which had its appointed place, and would be of unquestionable service in times of danger.

Mr. Baron Huddleston and a special jury have tried an action brought by Mr. Tod Healy against a Mr. Burton for compensation for breach of an agreement to acquire the plaintiff's interest in Her Majesty's Theatre for £50,000. It was provided that £10,000 should be forfeited by the defendant if the option to purchase was not exercised. This had been paid, and his lordship held that it was all that plaintiff was entitled to.

Mr. Parnell, speaking at Nottingham, said he thought the report of the special commission would not be to the discredit of his party. He had always been ready to admit that the Irish agrarian movement had not been free from deplorable occurrences, but he maintained that never had a movement been attended with as little to be deplored as that of the Irish Land League. He declared that the new movement in Ireland had fair to be the most powerful that had ever existed in that country.

The receipts on account of revenue from the 1st of April, 1889, when there was a balance of £5,352,002, to December 14th, 1889, were £55,651,130, against £55,479,381 in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, which began with a balance of £7,047,721. The net expenditure was £27,243,898, against £27,382,2 to the same date in the previous year. The Treasury balances on December 14th, 1889, amounted to £2,522,245, and at the same date in 1888 to £2,576,166.

Browning only made one public speech. The students of Edinburgh University were the inspirers of it. It was delivered during the tercentenary of the University in 1885, and was in response to the students' unanimously voted greeting. "My dear young friends," said the poet, "last, some people are good enough to say that my writings are sometimes unintelligible; but I hope to make myself intelligible now, when I say how affected and impressed I am by this noble,

this magnificent welcome, which you have given to one so unworthy as myself."

The seventh comet of the present year was discovered on the evening of the 18th inst. The Admiralty, it is said, have undertaken to defray all the expenses in connection with Captain Woodward's defence.

Mr. Schnadhorst, acting under medical advice, will start on a voyage to the Cape in the *Northam* Castle on January 1st.

Mr. Blaine has, at the direction of President Harrison, sent a telegram to Mr. Stanley, congratulating him on the successful result of his expedition.

It is now known that ten men were killed by the explosion at the Sant Elias mine, at Belmes, in Spain. Many of the rescued men are in a serious condition and several are missing.

The execution of Thomas Hook for the murder of his wife, Julia Ann, at Graveland, has been fixed to take place at Maidstone Gaol on the 31st of December.

A tramp lay down to sleep at Coalbridge. During the night he called upon to the top of a mass of hot ashes. The unfortunate fellow was literally roasted to death.

While Lewis George Hill, a Rugby brakesman, was signalling at Leamington, another driver mistook the signal, and ran his engine on to him. Hill was cut to pieces.

A telegram from Port Costa, California, announces that a fire broke out on board the ship *Durham*, while loading at that port for Liverpool. She was beached and flooded, but 2,400 tons of wheat were lost.

Sir Charles E. Lewis, Bart., has informed the Government whips that, owing to failing health he is about to retire from the representation of North Antrim. Mr. Atkinson, the new Solicitor-general for Ireland, will be the Conservative candidate for the district.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has received a donation of £9,000 in memory of the late Rev. John Turner, for some time a curate of the parish church of Whitley. The donation is made by his mother in his memory and by his special desire.

Corea has been of late in a very disturbed condition. The conclusion of a commercial treaty with Japan has given serious offence to the Chinese Government, and a futile attempt was made recently to assassinate the king. Several high officials are said to be implicated in the plot.

On dit that the King of Italy has been forbidden to smoke, as a serious throat illness is threatened. It is believed that the king is suffering from a disease which killed the poor Emperor Frederick.

The journeyman hairdressers at Newcastle, New South Wales, are a very loyal lot. Having asked for a holiday on the Prince of Wales's birthday, and got a refusal from their employers, they formally resolved never to work on the 9th of November, nor on any other public holiday, no matter what the circumstances may be.

Mr. Webster, the English manager of the Le Biana Mine at Pachuca, Mexico, has been murdered by unknown persons on a public highway near Pachuca. It is believed that the crime was committed for the sake of obtaining Mr. Webster's money, and any other valuables he might have upon his person. The British Minister at Mexico is inquiring into the matter.

At the Central Criminal Court, the grand jury ignored the bill against John Marsden, publican, in connection with the death of James Marsh, both as regarded the charges of murder and of manslaughter, and he was accordingly discharged. The recorder said he quite agreed with the grand jury in ignoring the bill. He thought Marsden was in great peril at the time, and that he was justified in defending himself.

The weekly returns of metropolitan pauperism for the first week of December show that the total number of paupers were—indoor, 60,029; outdoor, 37,403, making a total of 97,432. In the corresponding weeks of the three previous years the totals were—1888, 99,531; 1887, 102,539; and 1886, 96,078. The vagrants relieved during the week were 787 men, 140 women, children 14, making a total of 941.

Notice has been given to the men at all the chief collieries in Derbyshire that the advance of 10 per cent. in wages will be given them at the first making-up day in January. This is the third 10 per cent. advance since the strike of the three previous months. It is estimated that the three advances involve payment of additional wages in Derbyshire alone to the amount of £312,000 a year.

On Wednesday a destructive fire broke out on the premises of Messrs. W. Weaver, sack and bag manufacturers, Denmark-street, St. George's-in-the-East. Before the fire was discovered it had evidently been smouldering for a long time. The firemen lost no time in setting to work. They were successful in saving the adjoining out-houses, but the store where the flames originated was completely burnt out, the roof falling down. The cause of the fire is unknown.

A man named Edward Fordham, known to the police in London, Liverpool, and elsewhere, as a noted housebreaker, was committed for trial by the Wolverhampton stipendiary on Wednesday for stealing money from his lodgings. The prisoner boasts that he has committed nearly 200 robberies in different parts of England, for most of which he has never been convicted. Charles Peace, he states, was a fool to him at house-breaking.

The Irish Landowners' Convention met in Dublin on Wednesday, and adopted resolutions formulated by the executive committee, advocating a further extension of the facilities given by Lord Ashbourne's Act for the increase of occupying owners, but objecting to any form of compulsory sale, save on terms guaranteeing the landlords the full income of their judicial rents and the full value of proprietary rights reserved to them by recent legislation.

The Dover Town Council has decided to make application to the Board of Trade for a provisional order for supplying the town with the electric light. The matter has been debated for several years on applications brought before the council by private companies, but the corporation at length has decided to take the matter into their own hands, the townspeople being very desirous of getting the lighting of the town under their own control.

Margaret Hanton, 51, who lived in a cellar in Bradford, has been apprehended on the charge of the wilful murder of Richard Crowther, 3 years old, the child of a couple living in the upper part of the house. While the mother was out Hanton took charge of the child, which was very cross, and when Mrs. Crowther returned she found that the child had been severely burned across the lower part of the back. The child shortly afterwards died. Hanton has been brought before the magistrates and remanded.

The body of a child, named Drakeford, whose parents reside at Arpley-road, Penge, has been exhumed in the Crystal Palace District Cemetery, at Elmer's End, Beckenham. The death occurred at nine a.m. on the 2nd inst., a local medical practitioner certifying that the primary cause was apoplexy, and the body was buried on the 5th. The father subsequently gave information to the police to the effect that he believed the child's death was accelerated by a blow on the head occasioned through the negligence of a nurse. An inquest will now be held.

At the Central Criminal Court, James Jones, alias John Murphy, 22, painter, pleaded guilty to stealing a purse containing £3 1s., the property of Mrs. Frances Brodie, a lady residing in the Junction-road, Holloway. Prosecution was in charge on the afternoon of the 5th inst., when the police to the effect that he believed the prisoner's purse from her hand. Prisoner seen by a gentleman taking the purse, was followed and given into custody. The Common Sergeant

sentenced prisoner to twenty months' hard labour.

Gliesebricht, the well-known German historian and privy councillor, has died at Munich. It seems likely that the Southwark Subway Electric Railway will be opened for traffic about March next.

Mr. J. E. Bulwer, Q.C., has been appointed Master of the Garden of the Inner Temple, in succession to the late Sir John Maule, Q.C.

English hares are becoming so numerous in sections of New Jersey that farmers there fear they will soon be as great a nuisance as the sparrow.

A wealthy Colorado woman says that the begging letters which have reached her during the last six weeks called, in the aggregate, for a sum of money as large as her entire fortune.

The amount of liquor imported into India last year was more than double what it was in 1884, and the manufacture of ale in India is more than double the quantity imported.

The Earl of Lytton, the English ambassador to France, is confined to his apartments in consequence of having had a slight fall in the courtyard of the British Embassy.

Three ladies who were injured in the Armagh railway disaster have received £1,000 each, and four other ladies less seriously injured have received between them £1,450.

A farmer named Kruse, at East Farleigh, Kent, was showing a revolver to his wife, when the weapon accidentally exploded and the wife was killed.

A New York telegram states that the British schooner *Mary*, from Newfoundland, has been seized at Gloucester (Massachusetts) by the United States Customs authorities for discharging her cargo without a permit.

The Post Office Directory for 1890 contains no less than sixteen and a half columns of Smiths, and each column contains about a hundred names. There are only two Smiths, but about a score of Smyths.

It has given great satisfaction in Scotland to learn that the Prince of Wales has consented to open the Forth Bridge on March 4th, next year. His Royal highness will, it is expected, be accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh.

At the Old Bailey on Wednesday Edward Lyons, a labourer, was convicted of highway robbery with violence in the Euston-road, and was sentenced to fifteen months' hard labour and twenty strokes with the "cat."

Some of the Birmingham roughs who came to London with the special train of superannuated people before that they had been in the metropolis half an hour they were locked up for throwing stones at the police.

An official contradiction has been given to the statement contained in a telegram from Constantinople, dated December 17, announcing the recall of Prince Malcom Khan. It is absolutely devoid of foundation.

At Munster Winter Assizes, Mr. Justice Murphy sentenced two of the Waterford rioters to ten years' penal servitude each, and five others, including two females, to eighteen months' imprisonment.

A telegram from Vienna announces that the declaration of Count Taaffe in the Reichsrath on the subject of the preservation of the constitution in Bohemia has been favourably received by the morning papers, and even the opposition journals express satisfaction.

A tribute to the memory of the late Mr. E. P. Bouverie has been paid by the Ottoman Minister of Finance and Mr. Caillard, the delegate at Constantinople of the British bondholders. They state that Mr. Bouverie was one of the principal contributors to the improvement of Turkish financial credit abroad.

The police have found at West Hampstead the dead body of a female child, this being the third discovered and supposed to have been murdered within the past few days. The body was picked up on a secluded footpath near Blackburn-road, and was wrapped in a newspaper. The other bodies were found near the same place.

There was unveiled on Wednesday, in the Abbey Church, Dunfermline, a handsome monumental brass over the tomb of King Robert the Bruce, whose remains were discovered in a vault beneath the church in 1818. The ceremony was performed by Lady Louisa Bruce, a collateral descendant of the great Scottish king.

A letter having been addressed to the directors of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company, asking them to remove a deputation with reference to the third-class fare between Clapham Junction and Victoria, a letter has been sent in answer, promising that a reduction shall be made on and from the 1st of next month, from 3d. to 2d.

The inquiry at Leeds respecting the deaths of two men employed in the Leeds Forge, who were found dead at the works on the 20th ult., was concluded on Wednesday. After hearing the evidence of Dr. Stevenson, who had made an analysis on behalf of the Home Office, the jury returned a verdict that the men died from inhaling water gas, which was not at the time sufficiently odourised to enable them to detect it.

The latest Court news, says a St. Petersburg correspondent, is the death of the mistress of the Grand Duke Nicholas. This lady was formerly a ballet dancer, by name Chesloffova, and the Grand Duke was exceedingly attached to her, spending an immense fortune over her. The Grand Duke himself has been seriously ill since the death of his mistress, and he now lies at her lodgings in a critical state.

An interesting reminder of the Great Fire of London is to come before the City Lands Committee of the Common Council. It will take the form of a proposal to place on the walls of the new lobby the portraits (formerly in the Law Courts at Guildhall) of the judges, painted about the year 1671, in testimony of the City's gratitude for their services in settling the question of the property of the citizens after the fire of 1666.

The body of Frank Matthews, a private of the 5th Dragoon Guards, stationed at Leeds, was found in the Leeds Workhouse on Wednesday. He went to that city on furlough, and had been missing since November 14th, when he was seen going in the direction of the canal. His furlough expired at the end of November, and he has since been gazetted as a deserter. Deceased had five years in the Army, and, having had sunstroke in India, it is supposed he committed suicide.

The will of Eliza Cook, the poetess, has just been made public, and the particulars will be studied with interest. It was currently thought, in consequence of the Civil List pension she received, that the authoress was in straitened circumstances, and would leave nothing behind her; but the personality is sworn at £5,057. Her literary works she leaves to her nephew, who is to have sole control of them, taking 30 per cent. on the proceeds for himself, and paying the remainder to her brother John.

At a meeting of members of the Conservative party, at the Constitutional Club, Bristol, Mr. James Ford, a county magistrate of Somerset, had just seconded a resolution when he sank into his chair, and, turning deadly pale, suddenly expired. For many years Mr. Ford, who was head of the firm of Messrs. Ford and Canning, was the leader of the Conservative party in Bristol, and he it was who succeeded in inducing Sir Michael Hicks Beach to resign his Gloucestershire seat and to contest West Bristol.

No fewer than 22,937 stray dogs, captured this year in the streets of London by the police, have been received at the Battersea Home. The muzzling order is enforced as far as possible by the constables, although some persons place considerable difficulties in their way. A cat which has occurred in the North of England conclusively shows the necessity of continuing the order. Last week a boy named Edward Harold Whitehead was bitten in the thumb by a mad dog.

On Sunday hydrophobia set in, and on Tuesday the child died.

A Liberal Unionist association has been formed at Brighton. The chairman is Alderman Davey, and the honorary secretary Mr. O. Embling.

On account of the recent disturbances at Odessa University, eighty of the students have been expelled.

France and England have, it is stated, decided on recognising General Hippolyte as President of Haiti.

A report is in circulation in St. Petersburg that a conspiracy against the Czar has been discovered, and that several officers implicated in the plot have been arrested.

The subscriptions for M. Rubinstein, in honour of his recent jubilee, have amounted to 30,000 roubles, and will be applied by the celebrated pianist towards the new building of the Academy of Music.

Habitual criminals will fare hard in Illinois from this time forth. Under a new law, two men found guilty of robbery, it being their third conviction for the same offence, have been sentenced to "imprisonment in the penitentiary for the term of their natural lives."

The death is announced of Mr. Joseph Mackay, a well-known London litterateur. Beginning his career as an artist in black and white, Mr. Mackay afterwards turned to literature, writing largely in prose and verse. The deceased was only 39 years of age.

Many City firms will close (for the Christmas) on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, December 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th. Other firms have arranged for one-half of their staff to be absent from the 21st to the 27th, and the other from the 24th to the 30th.

An extraordinary development of the strike movement has taken place in Birmingham. The waiters have struck against the employment of female labour at public dinners, and they have held an indignation meeting and resolved to form a trades union.

M. Andrieux, ex-prefect of police and ambassador of Paris, has been condemned by the Tribunal of Correctional Police to three months' imprisonment, 1,500 francs (4000) fine, and 5,000 francs (12500) damages, for a libel published in the *Petite République* on M. Héliou.

The leaders of the Unionist party at Nottingham have arranged for a visit of Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P. for South Tyrone, to Nottingham, on January 14th. Mr. Goschen has also consented to visit Nottingham early next year, for the purpose of addressing a meeting of Unionists.

In revising their bye-laws, the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council have decided not to do away with the penalty for failing to report chimney fires, although the abolition was strongly recommended by the chief officer. The clause of the necessity of sending so many of his men to the police courts to prove them.

An Exeter boy, named Whitestone, had been warned by his master not to meddle with a bull. However, the warning had no effect, the lad still continuing to tease the animal. At last the bull, becoming infuriated, rushed at the lad, and on his falling pushed him along the ground, and then knelt on him. The lad was killed.

We consume vastly more tea than any other people. The Germans consume 1lb. to our 33lb., and the French 1lb. for our 13lb. Indeed, while we and our colonies use from 4lb. to 7lb. per head, and the United States 1lb., the only non-English-Saxon people who exceed 1lb. are the Dutch.

Edwin Stone, a Derbyshire farmer, was incarcerated in Derby Gaol awaiting trial on a charge of stealing £66. On a wandering his rounds he discovered Stone hanging by his pocket handkerchief from the cell window ventilator, his legs being tied together just above the ankles. He was dead.

It is announced (a New York telegram says) that Mr. A. M. Palmer, the manager of Palmer's and the Madison-square Theatres, has bought all the rights to produce "The Indians" at New York, and the new opera will be presented early in January. Great interest has been awakened there by the accounts of the success of the opera in London.

It is said that at Toledo, in the State of Ohio, a glazier was at work on the roof of a house when his sleeve, which was wet with rain, touched the wires which fed the incandescent lamps with an alternating current. The unfortunate man fell dead in such a position that his body lay supported by the wires, and was only found by accident some hours after the occurrence.

Over a hundred of the agricultural labourers in the employ of Lord Wantage have received a bonus of profits made for the year ending Michaelmas last. The men selected were those (with a few exceptions) who have worked on his lordship's home farm for two years and upwards. This is the third year that Lord Wantage has given his men a bonus.

A reward of £50 has been offered by the Duc d'Aumale for the arrest of Alfred Hill, alias Lively, charged with participating in the fatal attack on his royal highness's gamekeeper, Frederick Stephens, at Lechlwyck on November 10th. A verdict of wilful murder has been returned against Hill by a coroner's jury, and his two companions, Joseph and Samuel Boswell, have been committed for trial.

It is reported that Lord Spencer has decided to sell the celebrated library at Althorp. The collection of books at Lord Spencer's ancestral seat is not only one of the largest, but one of the finest in the world. It includes fifty Cantons and also a Mazarin Bible. The library is also rich in historical works, and when the sale takes place it will attract bibliophiles from all parts of the world.

A fire occurred about two o'clock on Thursday morning at Luton, on the premises of Mr. Thomas Withington, grocer, but the outbreak was discovered before much damage was done. Upon the police making an examination certain suspicious circumstances were discovered, quantities of partially burned matches and straw being found in conformity to vessels containing paraffin. Withington was apprehended on the charge of arson.

A fire occurred on Thursday at the Albion Spinning Company's mill, at Atherton, near Leigh. The premises, which were completely gutted, contained a thousand spindles. The fire broke out in the top room at half-past six o'clock, owing to the fall of a gas pipe, which set light to the cotton. Three fire-engines were soon on the spot, but the flames had a firm hold, and in three hours the whole place was in ruins. The damage is estimated at £12,000.

The body of a man has been found in Wyckwood Forest, near Charlbury, Oxfordshire. It lay about fifteen yards from the road, and had evidently been there for about six months. As decomposition had set in, it was not possible to ascertain closely the appearance of the deceased beyond that he seemed to be about 40 years of age and 5ft. 7in. or 8in. in height. Some money was found on the body, and there lay near the left hand an open clasp-knife.

A woman named Winlaw, the licensee of a public-house in Benn's Gardens, Liverpool, and a ship's captain named Wry, who was living with her, were charged on Wednesday on suspicion of setting fire to the house. When the fire broke out the police were called, and it was found that the house had been set alight in half a dozen places, petroleum also being put about the stock. The prisoners' wearing apparel had been removed, and a demand was granted that this might be traced.

Mr. P. A. Taylor, formerly Radical member for Leicester, has sent the following letter to a member of the Leicester Liberal Union:—"Brighton, December 17th.—I am glad to see that there is still a patriot party in Leicester. I have been surprised and pained to see how (apparently) general has been in Leicester the support of Mr. Gladstone in his strange reversal of all his previous opinions and statements in regard to Ireland. He ends his political life with

the mad attempt to restore the Heptarchy and destroy the empire."

A stained glass window is about to be placed in Storrington Church, Sussex, as a memorial of the late Major Bartolot, by his old schoolfellows.

There is no truth whatever in the widely circulated report that Viscount Ebrington, M.P., is about to go abroad for the winter in consequence of the precarious state of his health.

Mr. Francis Roubilland Conder, the civil engineer and scientific writer, died suddenly at Guildford while reading in his study. He was an authority on the decomposition of sewage, his iron process being in use at Windsor Castle, Chichester Harbours, Alnwick, and many other places.

Brookwell Park, which has been secured to the public at a cost of about £120,000, will, providing the County Council's bill dealing with the question of the park be passed in June next—as is confidently anticipated—be opened about the end of August.

The commissioners appointed by the Bishop of Carlisle to inquire into the circumstances of the alleged clerical scandal at Burchy-Sands gave their decision on Thursday. They were unanimously of opinion that there was not sufficient prima facie ground for instituting further proceedings against the Rev. E. H. Fitch, the vicar.

The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh and suite left Charing Cross Station on Thursday morning by the ten o'clock Ostend express for Dover, en route to Calais, via Ostend, Cologne, &c. The Russian ambassador and several ladies and gentlemen were on the platform to bid their royal highnesses farewell.

At the Thames Police Court on Thursday, Mark Wood, 30, described as a waiter, of 32, Mile End-road, was charged on a warrant with keeping and managing a disorderly house. Mr. Lushington fined the accused £15 and 25 sh. costs, or in default two months.

An attempted murder has just been reported from Jersey. Two men appear to have entertained a liking for the same woman, and one of them took a gun loaded with grape shot, and waited outside the other's window. On his rival, who is named Deguynly, appearing, he discharged the gun full in his face. The injured man lies in a critical condition.

The Italian ship *F. S. Ciampi*, from San Francisco, arrived at Queenstown on Thursday, and reported that on the 4th inst., in lat. 30.23 N., long. 30.02 W., she sighted a large vessel without mast, and on nearing her she was found to be abandoned. Her decks were almost level with the water, and as there was a heavy sea on it was impossible to discover her name.

At the Warwickshire Assizes on Thursday, Mr. Justice Williams sentenced George John Mayhew, late superintendent at the Birmingham Post Office, to ten years' penal servitude for stealing post letters. The prisoner had charge of the sorting department, and a series of thefts had taken place whilst he was on duty. He was caught in the act. He had a salary of £240 a year.

Philip Wobber, who was indicted at the London Sessions on Thursday, before Sir P. H. Edlin, chairman, for obtaining £20, the moneys of Charles Larnder, was placed in the dock for sentence. The chairman said he had come to the conclusion that the prisoner had been trifling both with the prosecutor and the court. He would have to undergo a term of five months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

Mr. W. H. Coates, hon. sec. to the Mayhew Committee, writes that that organization is working away quietly, and a mass of information has been worked up, and this will be shortly placed in the hands of the public by the chairman, Mr. A. W. Macdonald. He adds:—"We have not given in, and do not intend to do so, until we have thoroughly tried every means at our disposal for the liberation of this woman."

In Dublin Castle on Thursday, an address was presented to Lord Zetland by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, congratulating him on his appointment to the viceroyalty. The address dwelt on the efforts of the Government to improve the industrial resources of Ireland, including arterial drainage, and referred specially to the Light Railways Act. Lord Zetland, in reply, assured them that the policy of the Government would not be changed.

The Camberwell guardians have resolved, after a very long discussion, to erect a new workhouse for the old and indigent poor of the parish, and to enter into negotiations for the purchase of some land near Clapham Hill Railway Station, at a price of £100,000. It was also resolved to communicate with the owner of the Newlands estate, Peckham Rye, with the view of ascertaining whether he would make any abatement on the price asked for the site, viz., £50,455.

The Queen, it seems, is unfashionable. According to a journal which is an authority on dress, "her Majesty's bodies are always made in the same way, however fashion may change. Those for Court functions, of course, have short sleeves and recent lull. All have deep basques all round. Her Majesty's bodies for ordinary wear are cut with no collar and with only

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 Never fails. Cures obstructions from whatever cause. Two guineas a box. No pill or powder like them. They are NOT GENUINE PENNYFALL'S, SCOTT'S, BUTLER'S, OR MILLER'S PILLS. Price, 2s. 6d., 4s., and 11s. a box.—Signor THOMAS, 133, Pomeroy-st., London, S.E., or of chemists.

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NERVOUS DEBILITY, LOSS OF ENERGY AND STRENGTH.
A GENTLEMAN, having been a great sufferer, will be pleased to forward a Physician's Prescription that cured him, on receipt of stamped envelope.—Address, W. ROSE Esq., Somerleyton Villa, Brixton, Surrey.

DR. FOUNTAIN'S FEMALE PILLS.
THE ORIGINAL AND ONLY RELIABLE PRESCRIPTION
SILVER falls in the most obstinate cases. Ingredients

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**GOUT, RHEUMATISM,
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The excruciating pain is quickly relieved and cured in a few days by this celebrated Medicine. These Pills require no restraint of diet during their use, and are certain to prevent the disease attacking any vital part. Sold by all Chemists at 1s. 1d. and 2s. 3d. per box.

"VINUM COCAE-LORIMER"
LORIMER'S COCA WINE.
An Astringent of the Fête of Society.
A powerful MUSCULAR, NERVE, and VOICE TONIC.
 Removes acid and prevents Jaundice. **STIMULATES and RE-**
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 Bottles 2s. 6d. each; 3s. 6d. dos. of all Wine Merchants.
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**PAINS IN THE BACK GRAVEL, LUMBAGO, GOUT,
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A **PILL** universally admitted to be worth a Guinea a Box.
Indigestion, Sick Headache, Flatulency, Stomach Pain,
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Swelling after Meals, Bloating and Distension,
Cholic Effusions of Heat, Loss of Appetite, Short
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Dyspepsia, Stomachic and Biliousness, Constipation and Irritation.

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As a remedy for Coughs in general, Asthma, Bronchitis, Hoarseness, Shortness of Breath, Hoarseness and all the Coughs, Whooping Cough, the Pills stand out as the best ever offered to the public, and will remove that sense of oppression and difficulty of breathing which deprive the patient of rest. Let a person take **BEECHAM'S COUGH PILLS** at night, and the most violent cough will in a short time be cured.

Ditto last Pref., 74, 1/2	Ditto last Pref., 112 1/2, 20
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MINES.	
Cape Copper, ---	Montana, ---
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Albion, Ordinary, 8 1/2	Hotchkiss, 6 1/2, ---
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Guinness Ordinary, 5 1/2, ---	

his short, business-like declaration, he boastfully
counts how he slew the dragon and the Turkish
night and married the King of Egypt's daughter.
The white shirt is so important to imitate the
clerical dress and belongs to the time when the
miracle play was, with all its seeming foolery and
reverence, enacted in church by men who did not
scruple to put on the priestly vestments for the
occasion.

And now to obtain the fight, which is absolutely
necessary to the entertainment, he goes on to his
saturnation saint, addressing him as follows:—
Here comes I, it is now, all the Seven Champions of
Christendom had a part in it, but to-day every
knight has a chosen enemy of its own for
the valiant George to tackle. In the South it
is usually a Saracen or a Turkish knight, but on
the occasion to which I have already referred it
was Goliath. The most astounding anachronism
of the miracle play was created on these occasions,
that the fiery colloguy which follows beats all
precedent in this respect. In steps the biggest
guy of the group, exclaiming:—

Here comes in Goliath,
Goliath is my name,
I've come to fight you, by my side,
I hope to win the game.

Goliath in appearance does not differ materially
from St. George. Pierce moustachios are painted
on his smooth lips with burnt cork, and he is
otherwise tattooed into an appearance of wild
ferocity. The pistol by his side is a freak of the
librettist's fancy, but his roaring mighty sword
(which serves him for a walking-stick out of doors)
made of wood and with a hilt formed by fastening
a strong bar across with a tenneny nail. Where
there is no giant, but a Turkish knight, the answer
to the challenge of St. George runs:—

Here comes I, the Turkish knight,
Just comes from Turkey land to fight.
I'll fight thee, St. George, St. George, the man of courage
And since thy blood's so very hot, I'll quickly make it cold

Whether to Goliath or the Turk the warrior
saint, as might be expected, answers bravely. To
the latter he speaks somewhat chaafinly:
Just like he speaks somewhat chaafinly
I'll fight thee, St. George, St. George, the man of courage
And since thy blood's so very hot, I'll quickly make it cold

Therefore then, Turkish knight,
Pull out thy sword and fight.
Pull out thy purse and pay.
You must satisfy me ere you go away.

To return to the play, where Goliath appears it
will be noticed that the colloguy is much sharper
and more pointed with him than the other,
probably because in process of passing the words
on from one generation of schoolboys to another,
all that has been essential has been dropped.
Here is his reply:

The game, sir, the game, sir,
It's not within your power
I'll back you into inches
In less than half an hour.

GOLIATH (sneeringly): You, sir,
St. G. (confidently): Yes, I, sir.
GOLIATH: Pull out your sword and try, sir.

Then follows a fight, in which the Philistine goes
under, and remorse comes upon the saintly
knight, who, apparently forgetting his assumed
character, exclaims:

Alas! alas! what have I done,
I've gone and killed the farmer's son!
Round the kitchen, round the hall
Is not a doctor to be found at all?

Here the affair takes a different phase, and then
begins what mediæval people never seem to have
been tired of, a little colloquy with the doctors, and
the doctors could hardly have been undeserved at
a time when the court physician of Edward II.
claimed to have cured the Prince of Wales of
small-pox by wrapping him in red clothes, and
avowed that a sovereign remedy for the stone was
a mixture of powdered hesties and crickets.

In therefore, steps the doctor with long grey
beard and little fellows, and says his bit of the
dialogue in a better preservation than all the
rest. Advancing with a hipple, and looking from
side to side, he says:

Yes, here comes in old Doctor Browne,
The best old doctor in the town.

St. G.: How do you know you are the best doctor in the
town?

Dr. B.: By my travels, sir.
St. G.: How far have you travelled?

Dr. B.: I've been to France, from France to Spain,
And back to Old England again.

St. G.: What can you cure?

To this he replies with a list of diseases, the
recitation of which made even the country girl
hide their faces, and which, therefore, may not
be worth repeating.

St. G. (cut-trapping): Can you cure a dead man?

Dr. B.: Yes! I have a little boy.
They call it boy-poxy.
For a little to his sons,
And a little to his clan,
Rise up, Jack, and let us hear yousing.

Thereupon up gets the dead man and break
forth into melody as thus:

Once I was dead, but now I'm alive;
Blessed be the happy man that made me to revive;
What the guzards should do now antiquaries
may tell us, but their actual performance seem
to show that only scraps of the ancient proceed-
ings are remembered. The songs, and on the
shoulders, and the songs in that red-dressed
chorus, "You go and ask, and you'll soon find the
owner." "How deep is that pond over yonder?"
again cries the interlocutor. "Sink in at the an-
you'll soon find the bottom," sing the chorus.
Besides this, there comes in a refrain of which
the boys themselves do not know the words, and
it seems more or less of a new song, and sounds like
"The boys are all here, how they do swim over."
These are, undoubtedly, fragments of an old
choral dialogue, which, in the old time, filled
the intervals between tricks and feats of jugglery.
Modern songs have been substituted for all the
old songs, except the final one:

Blinkin' Jack, the collier,
He's a blivin'!

He sold his wife for forty pounds, and what the worse was
"Wit his pockets full o' silver and his cellar full o' beer,"
I wish you a merry Christmas all a happy New Year.

After this a Bessie passes round his tin box of
subscriptions, or a character, whose appearance
now noted for the first time, steps out and says:

Here comes I, little Johnny Jack,
Wife and family at my back,
My family's large though I am small,
And so a little better than you all.

Roast beef, plum-pudding, strong beer, and mince-pie!
Who loves these better than Father Christmas and I!
A mug of Christmas ale will make us merry and sing
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CHAPTER I.

Some people said I drank. And why? Because I professed to have seen a ghost. But I will tell you my story, that you may judge.

On a certain Sunday in October, I took an afternoon train down to R—. October is not the pleasantest time to go on the river, but I had received a pressing telegram from some American friends the day before, and had promptly replied: "Why, certainly."

My friends were a Mrs. Desart and her sister Edna. I had seen a good deal of them during the season, and had ever since been trying to pay them a promised visit. Hitherto my duties in the City had during the week compelled me to put off so many "social engagements," that this was the first Sunday afternoon on which I had nothing to do.

The cold east wind and covered sky on this particular Sunday night had induced us to postpone my visit. My sister Mrs. Desart was only going to spend a few weeks more in England, when, the leave of her house expiring, she would carry off her sister to their transatlantic home. Edna was by no means the ordinary "young sister" who usually supplies the deficiency of an "aged mother" with the tourist American. She was pretty, bright, and remarkable for her age, and from what had been said of her during the season I wished to see more.

The late reception of me quite compensated for the discomfort of the autumn journey, and a pleasant walk made the time pass quickly till the dinner hour. At this meal the parties carried over, completed by an amusing friend of Mrs. Desart's and my own, whom she had evidently invited for her own edification, knowing, by experience, that Edna was likely to monopolise the greater portion of my small talk.

The evening was eventually brought to a close, and the ladies were about to leave the dining-room when Edna, in a tone evidently louder than she intended, said to me, "You must stay till the last train."

Her sister, overhearing the remark, turned to her, said in a voice strangely sad and anxious—more so, I thought, than the occasion warranted—she was drowned. "No. Even during the last train," I said, as the word that I myself repeated, she seemed that I myself interpreted, that an anxiety to be of me she continued, "Mr. Rathurst will find the 11.30 the best, I think."

"Oh, of course," replied Edna, also in a tone that struck me as unnatural, at the same time passing her arm around her sister's waist, and adding apologetically, "How stupid of me," and drew her out of the room.

When the butler and brought coffee, as Stubbs the other man and I were looking after it, I could not refrain from saying, "Wonder what a death is the cause with the last train up to town?" "Can't think," said Stubbs, not appearing to be much impressed, "might well look at Bradshaw."

Having procured this most useful book, after searching some little time, exclaiming, "Why, of course, last train only goes to Fulham—have to wait home you know." Last train only goes up to town in time for breakfast, thereabouts. But you'll have to take that at 11.50, you know." And then he proceeded to tell me that good old story of the American who was crossing and sweating at the slowest one of our trains, till the guard said, "You ought to be in a hurry, sir?" Well, I guess it'd get out and walk," replied the American, "I got up a late night, and as the train was late, I got old and new, as is the custom of it after dinner. I don't allow this, however, to go very long, but soon suggested that we should go upstairs."

We found Mrs. Desart occupied with some work near a tall lamp at one end of the drawing-room, and from the sound of a piano I knew that Edna occupied a corner cut off by that instrument from the rest of the room.

As I was about to go on picking when I came, saying she would rather talk. Whether I acquiesced or desisted, I would have been given an example of "things one would rather be left unaided," and was silent, and having inserted ourselves in two comfortable chairs, she began conversation by exclaiming, "It was so odd to me." Somehow I knew that she referred to a train incident, and I did not say, "Why?" "You beamed and to town, Jack," she replied, looking at her voice so that her sister might not overhear. Then she went on, "He's not really our uncle, although we always of him so. He was my brother-in-law's uncle, was devoted to my sister and she to him. My sister first came down here, soon after her husband's death, Uncle Jack came over to Enniscorthy to see her, and died in a rather mysterious way, but you may have heard of him. But I do so wish I could talk of these dreadful things she added with a sigh. "I haven't even said glad I am you were able to come down at all."

"No; but do tell me the rest about your uncle," I interrupted, almost rudely, for her story referred to my mind something I had read in the papers not so very long ago, and the connection was a very significant one.

"Well, that is about all," she went on. "Uncle Jack had to go to Fulham late at night to see a sick friend, I believe, and he took a wheeler to go to his friend's house. Some connected with the police stopped the wheeler, because, he said, the cabman was 'driving furiously.' But the driver said he was going as fast as he could, because 'he appeared to be a heavy build and had told him so.' When the policeman, or whoever it looked inside, he found poor Uncle Jack. The coroner afterwards said he had discovered in a fit, and nobody blamed the cabman, because a few shillings were in Uncle's waistcoat pocket, and there was proof of robbery. My sister believes he must have more money with him than that, but the cabman ran away and left a few shillings as a 'blind' that poor Uncle Jack may have some kind of stroke while struggling with the robber, for uncle's heart was always weak. I face of horror of the dead man, and the affair, had such an effect on my sister's nerves that nothing on earth would persuade her to any friend of hers to go near the place; and she has the mention of it."

"I filled me with a vague sort of imagining. I not refrain from asking her one or two questions." "Do you mean to say that no suspicion attached to the cabman?"

"Well, I told you that some change was in Uncle Jack's pockets, and if he were arrested and robbed, it is quite probable that he'd be hanged before he was hanged. But I don't think, for, with the exception of a few blows which he might just as easily have got in there were no signs of violence." Besides added a pause, "the cabman's manner was utterly devoid of all appearance of dread, and during the time that he had known in Fulham, he had never been convicted of any misdemeanor."

"And have you the same opinion about the same objection to the place?"

"Well, I should not like any one—I mean to say I hope you won't stay there to you only gain half an hour here, and it is more comfortable going straight back to Enniscorthy, you have promised to come down again, and I wish to see that you keep your promise."

Thus the conversation turned into more formal channels, and when Stubbs called out must be of (he lived close by or I should not train, it was anything but "murder and death" that we were discussing.

his story. Suffice it to say, that they turned chiefly upon the pretty American, and I think it would not have been otherwise with any young man; for I was some years younger then.

I was perfectly happy until I reached the station. There, to my dismay, I learnt that I had missed the 11.30 by a few seconds, and should have to await the next train. And that was the last one. Under ordinary circumstances, having to wait a little longer than usual, would have caused me little annoyance. I had a good clear with me, and, as I said before, plenty to think about; but, at the mention of the last train my mind reverted to my conversation with Edna Kane, and I again remembered the report I had read a few months before, and which, in conjunction with the story of Uncle Jack's death, had caused me such an unpleasant sensation.

The paragraph in the police news which I recalled to my mind was from a report of the death of a man, Stone, a publican, who had been found in a bye-lane in Fulham at an early hour the morning of a wet day, with the mark of a wheel across his neck—probably the cause of his death. The account went on to say that the deceased was returning after a holiday spent in London, and that this is no doubt why he had but a small portion in his pockets of the three sovereigns with which he was known to have started. Further evidence against the deceased having been seen in several public houses at different hours of the day, and it had appeared that, partly overcome by drink, he had stumbled in the road, and had been unable to rise. The only circumstance for which the authorities could not account was that to the mud on his boots adhered some apparently fresh straw, but to this they did not attach much importance.

The wheel had passed obliquely across the deceased's face and throat, crushing the lower part of his face, and rendering the features unrecognisable. The wheel of what? Well, the night was dark, and in a lane full of ruts, and obstructed a vehicle might pass over an object of the size of a man's throat without the driver paying over much attention.

I must, however, have allowed my mind to wander back to pleasant themes, for on arriving at the station I found myself smiling to myself and looking forward to another Sunday at R—.

I was not much disappointed at not finding a cab, for I have already remarked that the conveyance secured some time before I reached the station, and that, at numerous in the suburbs as they now are, and at all events, I could walk better. Besides, when you are somewhat agitated in mind there is nothing like a walk to calm and soothe you. Walk quickly, I say, if you are excited; overcome with happiness; walk slowly if you are overcome with grief.

Certain it is, that drawing my cape tight round me to keep out the wind, I stepped smartly in the direction which I thought to be the right one, and on this occasion I was doubly so, and walked some distance before I became aware that I ought to be in familiar paths and that was not so, that the lane in which I found myself was apparently getting worse and worse under—

—and that it was raining.

As I had not the slightest idea where I had come to, I thought my wisest plan would be to push on, and then if nothing turned up I would turn on some house and ask the way. But to later come, I was soon obliged to adopt, considering the state of the lane, was one o'clock.

After travelling over some hundreds of yards of open road, which appeared to me to have signs of building on either side, and which itself strewn with broken bricks and other building rubbish, I came to the beginning of a high wall which seemed to surround a large garden; and to say, if I could judge by the trees which appeared above it. This I took to be safe, and as large gardens must be well kept, and the gardeners would generally a porter's lodge, and should not hesitate to wake up the occupants; such a dwelling, as it would not involve disturbing many persons, and porters are accustomed being roused at odd hours.

If there were such a gate or lodge, they were not visible on this side of the enclosure, notwithstanding that the lamps were few and far between. I could distinguish the broken link of the wall to the further corner, and the other side, and I was soon, I thought, disappointed that the road involved the road in dense shadow, so dense, however, as to prevent my distinguishing a small darker mass in its midst. As I approached a dull and lurid light proceeding from the other side of the dark mass, and, as I came closer, I perceived that the gleam was cast by lamps of a cab. I approached still nearer, and the cabman standing behind the cab, and the apparently in good luck with some other person, were seen. I had taken more than two or three steps, the latter had disappeared into the darkness beyond.

The cabman bent down as though to see better, then rapidly climbed on to the box.

With some difficulty I turned the handle of the door and got into the cab. As I did so, I noticed that, although the handle of the door on the outside was like an ordinary one, on the inside was a small metal knob, and that a small beam of light, and very green, from the wall of the cab, although, in certain details the vehicle differed from a four-wheeler, was somewhat higher from the ground, and furnished with a double step, like that on private carriages. When I turned to pull up one of the windows, I could find none, only wooden shutters. As far as I could see in dim light, the whole interior presented a shabby appearance, increased by the fact there was nothing but a little straw under the feet.

I was far too tired, however, by this time, mind what the conveyance was like, provided got home, and having shouted my address on the window I had left open, I made myself comfortable as circumstances would permit. Soothed by the motion of the cab, which was strangely smooth and silent, I soon found myself falling off to sleep.

It could not have been many minutes later I awoke with the unpleasant sensation of what is being intensely tickled at the back of the neck, and something partly obscuring the light could penetrate the open window, on earth was it? The outline was so ordinary and so indistinct that it was seconds before I could make it out. I could distinguish a small head, the size of a baby's, supernaturally long thick neck, surmounting broad square shoulders. Was creature hooked on to the lower of the window by its elbows? No, here was a head, and last time I was passing a horrible! "Get off, d—y!" I shouted, at the same time striking out with my clenched fist. As I did so the apparition glided off the step on which it had been standing, and although I immediately thrust my hand against the window, it was nowhere to be seen. It had slipped behind the cab, or was gone into darkness. It mattered little, it was gone.

In the moment's pause to the cabman to the cabman, who was one of the infrequent I had seen the most horrible deformities it has been my misfortune to behold. The revolting beggars who haunt one in the streets of Rome never force upon the sight of visitors an unpleasant exhibition of malformed nature like one I had just seen.

The head, as I have said, was no larger than an infant's. It was perfectly bald, except for a few stiff hairs, such as grow on an elephant's nose it had none, and the mouth, which was devoid of lips and furnished at wide intervals with irregular teeth. The eyes, which on a deep I had felt retted upon me, were so deeply into the head as to be hardly visible, but these dark dross or filth had discoloured

had held on to the window ledge. I should perhaps not have been so alarmed. My nerves must not have been unstrung by fatigue. As it was, I consoled myself with the knowledge that this creature, who had evidently wished to make use of my cab, had been left far behind it, and only a few moments afterwards, I found myself napping again. Only for a few minutes, however. This time I was awakened by a feeling of discomfort at my throat—a cold oppressive feeling. I did not immediately open my eyes, but thrust my hand under a hundred disagreeable protrusions. "The cab-rowler" I—fever-bore!—chill!—diphtherial—typhoid!—no! some one strangling me! The beast again—yes, here it is in the cab with me. As I open my eyes I see that ghastly misshapen form bending over me—its short strong arms stretched towards me, its icy hands below my chin—its thumbs and fingers windpipe—pressing—pressing all the ghastly gasp—choking—dying! I thrust my hand forward. I seize it by the sides of its long body and grapple with it. Ah! I am free! I hurl it on to the back seat. I shout, but the cab continues its course. The monster is up again, and its short bow-legs! It returns to the attack. What hellish strength—like some strange ape! When I seize it I feel that its body is as hard as wood, but I must keep those hands from my throat. I am getting exhausted. I thrust the brute back with my arm, and while I seize the cab I turn my head, and behold the beast's cab won't turn. Yes, but the beast's loathsome little round head with both hands, and feel my fingers sink into the sockets of its eyes. For a moment it relinquishes its hold and I mine. The next I am dashed backwards into the road. Even as I fall I see the door of the cab drawn to again. The cab increases its speed, I catch it in an instant I see the long neck of the creature crawling out of the window. I turn back to where I lie, and then I become unconscious.

CHAPTER III.

What is more pleasant than the feeling that you are getting better? Yet, when after a severe illness, I began to regain my strength, and became conscious of what was going on around me, I failed to experience the slightest satisfaction. Why, my mother and my sister made me feel it, it good souls! The doctor made me feel it, and my nurse, garrulous old hag! told it me. What! Surely that there was an impression that on the night of my misadventure, I had drunk champagne, and before starting on my journey homewards, a whisky-seltzer was all I had had the evening before. What did Edna Kane think? Well, Stubbs, who had heard of the whole affair, of course, and had been most kind and sympathetic, came and told me all he knew. He sympathetically appeared to be the only man who believed in me.

"It appears," he said, "as he sat one day on his bedside, that you were brought home unconscious at about the middle of the morning. You had been lying in the middle of a lane on the outskirts of Fulham, not a bit on the way home, as it had been pelted with rain nearly all night, you were drenched to the skin. This, in conjunction with the cold east wind, was enough to give any man a fever. The only question was, how did you come to be lying in a lane like that? Then as you regained partial consciousness, or rather, when you were a few fevered steps into the land of the living, you told every one the most horrible stories of how you had been attacked by a monster; you described a frantic struggle—a fight for life—the story itself was enough to frighten one into fits.

"Well the first thing your mother did was to write to Mrs. Desart and ask her for an account of your proceedings on that evening, and Mrs. Desart said that to the best of her knowledge, I had started from K— by the 11.30 train, I should have been at home by about one o'clock. I am sorry you had been tempted to counteract the salutary influence of the weather, but I wonder all Mrs. Kane stuck up for you for a time, after Miss D. stands to her in loco parentis, to speak, and—

"Where are they now?" I asked, unable to make any relevant remark, so great was the blow I had sustained.

"Oh, they changed their minds—found it cold on the river, and have gone abroad for a week, before returning to America."

"What do you mean to say that you—who know that I only drank a couple of glasses of whisky-dinner, and who yourself mixed me the whisky and seltzer before I left—you believe I was drunk too?"

"Certainly not, my dear fellow; besides everybody knows you were sober when you left Mrs. Desart's. But women, if they're told, will always believe a man drinks, and all I say will not hurt any difference. But, I am sure that I am not too tired, and my whole story again, if it is not too tired, and we will see what is to be done."

The whole thing—every incident in the adventures of that fearful night were so vividly pressed upon my mind, that I had little difficulty in according to his request.

"And now," I said, "what is to be done?"

"The first thing," answered Stubbs, "is to rest well. When I consider your nerves in a state to stand excitement, I shall take you down to Fulham, and we will not leave the place until we have proved to each other, by your admission, that I am not a feverish hallucination. But let well be content."

About ten days later, on the afternoon of a rainy Sunday—a day we had chosen on purpose to avoid ourselves of any similarity of incident—Stubbs and I were sitting in a railway carriage on our way to Fulham. On leaving the station we proceeded on foot down the different street paths, and lanes which I believed I had travelled when. When you have only been to a place a few seldom can you remember a hundred yards. This was the case on this occasion. First I thought should turn to the right, then I said I should turn to the left, then I insisted on taking it, only to find out my mistake when we had gone some way was becoming dark, and I was beginning to feel very tired, when we suddenly came plump into the long wall. There could be no mistake. The same unfinished road, still signs of future buildings on either side, lumps of cement, bricks sticks everywhere. And the long wall. "We are here," I exclaimed almost joyfully, and events excitedly; and forgetting my weakness I said I can be no mistake. The wall was long and round. Yet there, sure enough, two or three hundred yards down the other wall, stood a cabman standing by its side, his back to me, towards us, leaning with his elbow half way to the window, apparently talking to some one inside. As soon, however, as he heard our steps, he turned his head round almost without moving his body, and regarded us attentively, though trying to make us out in the semi-darkness. When I saw this time that the seven or eighty paces of him; then he suddenly appeared to recognize me, for he started, and, through somebody back into the cab, he pulled up the shutter, leaped on to the box, and started his horse off at the canter.

"That's the man!" I shouted to Stubbs, a same time dashing in pursuit. We followed hundreds of yards at the top of our speed, however, I felt it impossible for me to keep up, and Stubbs continued alone. The cab had turned to the right, and I saw it, so to speak, and continued straight line for some distance. Notwithstanding the ever-increasing darkness, I was able to see the vehicle in sight for a short time, and

"Some illness," I took advantage of a heap of stones, and, sitting down, waited. Presently Stubbs came running and stumbling back, hot and breathless, and would have passed me, had I not shouted out, "Here I am." When he regained his breath enough to speak, his voice sounded odd and shaky, as from some great emotion.

"Something awful has happened," he said. "I never thought of such such things in the world. Oh, how ghastly! We must go back and find the police station. That man's dead."

"Who?" I asked.

"Why, the driver. Come along; I'll tell you all about it."

I was by this time somewhat rested, and we picked our way, as well we could, towards the village.

"This is what happened," said Stubbs. "I kept the cab in sight as long as I could, but you know how fast it was going, and was constantly stumbling it was so dark. When I lost sight of it, I followed as well as I could, and the sound of the wheels. In a few minutes I heard a crash as though the cab had come in contact with something. Then there was a great commotion, a sound of something breaking, followed by yells and oaths. Didn't you hear anything?"

"Well, I did hear something, but it sounded more like a dog howling. It was a long way off."

The yell was like a dog's howl—something but more shriller and more unearthly. I couldn't see a thing clearly. Just when, by the sound of scuffling and blows, which I could now hear plainly, I thought I must be quite close. I found that the road went a long way round, and though my better course would be to try and get across a field.

"This was very stupid of me, as till then it was too dark to see the best way, but when I was half across this big field there was a little light from the moon, and looking across towards the road I saw a most awful sight."

"What?" I exclaimed. "Exactly. I must have broken out of the cab when it over-turned."

"There was the cab lying wrecked on its side with the window, which was now uppermost shattered. The driver was standing close to it cursing and swearing, with something, which was half in and half out of the broken cab, banged on to his throat. The driver was belaboured with this thing with his flat and the thing in the cab gave a whip. At every stroke the kind of groil, grinding noise just as I have heard a wild boar do."

"The man couldn't shake off his opponent, as I got closer I could see him swaying backward and forward exhausted. He left off fighting when I dashed at them, and groaning, 'I'm done,' I lay in a heap where he stood. At the same time to most terrible bang I have ever seen sprang up one leap out of the cab, carrying with it great splinters, and before I could do anything it had bounded away like a sort of kangaroo across the field. I can't describe it. I noticed that nothing precisely, except that there seemed to be no head, and hardly any legs or arms, and it was white."

"I confess I nearly fainted, and was turning away like a coward, but I was so glad I hadn't attacked me. I looked to the cabman. He was dead. We ought to go and tell the police."

"You believe me now, then?"

"I always believed you had been attacked—I know I did—but how could any one imagine that such a horror in existence as that monster. I thought that kind of thing never lived long at its birth—or was killed—or something of that sort—ought to be, I'm sure."

As we hurried on to the police station I was silent, pondering over this extraordinary case and termination of my last venture. No wonder that the intention of the wooden shuttle of the round brass knobs inside the cab door. A being, with hands like those of the moon could easily have been imprisoned as in a this in this without the necessity of having locks or any other arrangement foreign to ordinary hackney carriage, and likely to arouse the suspicions of the ordinary occupant.

Stubbs occasionally interrupted the train of thoughts by adding some fearful detail of what had seen, or by describing more vividly the unsmooth monster, its cries and utterances, the marvellous manner in which it had sprung up before it jumped.

We went and informed the police, then retired, tired out, sought an inn, and soon retired to our beds.

I could not sleep much. Once I sat up in the darkness, I could hear the yells and wild shriekings which Stubbs described. I trembled with terror and excitement. It could only have been the imagination of my overwrought brain, and I rank back to a feverish sleep. The first thing in the morning the porter called upon me, and told me that the man who had been told us the events of the murder of the night, and the result of his investigations.

While he, with half a dozen others, were the way to the spot indicated by us, suddenly saw jets of flame ascending to a distant field. Half the men continued their course, while the rest were told of inquire into the cause of the conflagration. Arriving near the fire they found it to proceed from a hotel, lately occupied by the cabdriver. Already the hut was almost reduced to a few boards and a thatched roof not taken to burn.

"But who was this man?" I interrupted. "I what the inspector told me most of my suspicions were confirmed."

It appeared that a short time after the death of Uncle Jack the driver of the cab in which he had been found left this part of the country. Before returning to his home in Ireland this uncanny individual made over the whole property to a friend, also an Irishman, appeared upon the scene as though by arrangement.

The "property" consisted of the wrecked hotel which had just been burnt, with its contents (what these were, nobody had seen), the adjoining shed, with the fairly good horse, which drew a home-made vehicle apparently his own unsuitable, mysterious chariot, for the owner of the cab was a still more secluded life, hardly even to be traced out as cab except at night.

"We have just been to the scene of the fire," continued the inspector, "and nearly every house was burnt. We were just coming away again, institute inquiries as to how it originated, one of my men picked up an arm-bone with remains of a sort of deformed hand on the fingers to speak of, only a great flat. Then we had another look and found several bits, which look to be human, only they're of proportion. A leg no longer than a child's and a piece of skull."

Well, not to weary you with a host of comparative details, the details of the case are scarce in the neighbourhood. I've asked for as little as possible about the matter.

It could do no good, and there was no fear of a recurrence of any horrid incidents such as we have heard. The result is that the few who bear record of my adventure at the time accuse me of having been under the influence of drink; but they are in the minority, and I might I care may remain in their ignorance have never heard what her my American friend said on this island. I do not wish to renew acquaintance with the woman who will throw you because you have once been drunk in her company, regretted, but one who will drop my name with suspicion is not worth knowing. That

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The People.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1889.

Our countless readers will admit, we feel assured, that they are presented with a most excellent Christmas box in this, the literary supplement, which accompanies our present issue. It is no exaggeration to say that, considering no less the quality of the matter than its quantity, no gift of greater value has ever previously been presented gratis by any newspaper in the world. We have endeavoured—with success, we trust—to cater for the tastes of all, as will be seen from the following index of contents. Poetry of the highest class, fiction both pathetic and sensational, by authors of mark, and other appetising dishes, make up the Christmas bill of fare to which we invite our myriad guests, with every confidence that each and all will find something to please their palates.

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THE GRUB-STREET GHOST!
 A STORY OF THE STAGE.
 RELATED BY A CELEBRATED SCENE PAINTER, AND TAKEN DOWN AS IT FELL FROM HIS LIPS.
 BY JOHN COLEMAN.

Touching this vision here, Is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.

CHAPTER I.
 GOSPEL ABOUT GHOSTS.

"Do you believe in ghosts?" abruptly inquired the great scene painter.

"Of course I do. I've seen scores of 'em. There's the Ghost of Hamlet's father; the blood-boltered Banquo; 'Great Julius Cæsar,' 'The Castle Spectre,' 'The Corsican Brothers,' the Polish Jew in 'The Bells'; then there's Professor Pepper's, to say nothing of—"

"Don't talk nonsense! I'm speaking of real ghosts. Do you believe in them?"

"No."

"But I do, for I've seen one!"

"Great Scott!"

"Yes, I have; but it's a long story, and I'll begin at the beginning."

"Do so, Barkins, do it's the best way."

"Well, I suppose you never heard of my being on the stage?"

"Never."

"Why, I was born on it, man alive."

"By Jove, that was beginning at the beginning."

"Well, yes. I couldn't well begin much earlier. I began twenty-three years ago, and I'm game now to walk or run, or box with any man of my age or inches."

"My father was an actor, and a very good one, too; as good as they made 'em in the palm days of the Kembles, Siddons, Keans, and the rest of them, though why they called 'em palm I don't know."

"If it be palm to be hard-worked and badly paid, they were palm, indeed."

"Why, now, I am, and the veriest duffer earns more in a month than my dear old Dad did in a year."

"My mother was a dancer, and a beauty, but beautiful as she was, and clever as father was, and industrious and abstemious as they both were, they often had a difficulty in making both ends meet, especially as my brothers and sisters persisted in making their débüt on the stage of life, quite regardless of the question of convenience."

"I was the first, and, as I have said, I was born literally born on the stage."

"In point of fact, I may say I was on it before I was born, but that is a matter of detail."

"This was how it happened."

"We were located in York; the play was 'Pizarro.' Dad was the Peruvian hero, mother was the principal Virgin of the Sun, and sang the solo (transposed for her voice) 'O, Power supreme!'"

"That is to say, she commenced it, poor dear, but never finished it, at least, not on that occasion, for she had to retire suddenly to the green-room (a very sumptuous apartment in those days), and in about half an hour's time I made my first appearance."

"The doctor said that I was a born actor, for I began to cowl like a chancier as soon as I saw the light."

"Well, sir, I was cradled in the property-room, weaned in the wardrobe, and at the mature age of twelve months, I made my first appearance in public as Cora's child in 'Pizarro' aforesaid."

CHAPTER II.
 COUNTRY AND TOWN.

Twelve months later I was promoted to the part of Cupidon, in a grand ballet d'action, by James D'Egville.

For a whole year after that I remained stationary, but upon my fourth birthday, I arrived at my first speaking part, the Duke of York, in 'Richard III.'

It was the family benefit. Dad was the Crook-back, and Mam was my brother, Wales, and a beautiful boy she made. Indeed, she might easily have been mistaken for my brother instead of my mother.

"Hess her dear heart! I can see her now, after nearly seventy years, in her black velvet tunic, with her bright eyes, her fair hair, and the daintiest, bonniest little legs and feet in all the world."

The benefit was a crusher, and on the strength of it Dad brought us all up to town, expecting to take London by storm, but he didn't, poor old boy, although worse actors have done so before and since."

"He got a job here and there, as best he could; and mother, who, as I have said, was a lovely dancer, was engaged two seasons running at the 'Garden,' as it was called."

At last Dad got an engagement as stage-manager at 'The Dust Hole,' afterwards the swell theatre in Tottenham Court-road, and put me on (for by this time I was nearly eight years old) as his call-boy.

"Though I say it, who ought not to say it, I was a smart lad, kept my eyes and ears open, and learnt everything I could."

thought that the crazy old wooden building would have come down about her ears with applause.

Our good fortune was too bright to last. Both the Dust Hole and the Olympic closed in the next month, and that was how we passed the rest of us—happened to migrate to Grub-street.

Now, this Grub-street theatre was built out of, or, rather, inside an old chapel.

I don't know how old it was, but it was a legend that John Milton and John Bunyan had used to say their prayers there.

Whether they did, or did not, I do not know. I only know that all the trappings and accoutrements, such as monumental brasses, escutcheons, funeral urns, tablets, cherubim and seraphim, &c.—were all tumbled pell-mell in a heap under the stage, which, by the way, was only about seven or eight feet above the ground.

The company was first-rate, so were the houses for a time, but we were soon played out, and old Bottelbroth, the manager, began to look round for some additional attraction to "pull 'em in," as he said.

Amid other distinguished performers, Bradley and Blanchard came and fought their celebrated broadsword combat, Dugrow did the Grecian statuette, Ellison played Sueton, and Walter, in 'The Children in the Wood,' and the famous dog of the caravan, came from Drury Lane, and proved to be the most attractive star of the goodly company.

CHAPTER III.
 THREE FANS.

It was at or about this time that one, Mr. Vere Fane, joined us.

Poor fellow! He was desperately seedy and hard up. His coat was threadbare, his hat unclean, his frayed and worn pantaloons were strapped tightly down over his cracked boots, and the huge black satin stock which rose to his ears concealed his shirt—that is, if he wore one.

For all his shabby turnout, Dad declared he was a gentleman, and so he was, every inch of him. All the company took kindly to Mr. Fane, but his special favourite, I wonder of me, and son he couldn't bear to be of him, and never weary of hearing him tell the story of Waterloo, at which he was present. He was at the ball in Brussels the night before.

He heard Wellington say, "Up Guards and at 'em," and was in the thick of the fray when the decisive charge was made.

Then he had seen Bonaparte's back, when in flight after the battle.

He didn't sympathize much with the Corsican then, but he was sorry for him afterwards when out there on the rock of St. Helena.

Next to me, Vere's greatest chum was Jim Stoddart, the Ogre, so called because he had lost an eye and had a broken nose, and because he had a chronic cold in his head, a head of abnormal dimensions, thatched with iron-grey hair.

A queer, eccentric, old fellow was Jim, rough and tough, and gruff, short and stout and strong, but with all his roughness, he had a heart as tender as a woman's.

As for work, he was a glutton at it. He was property man, painter's labourer, and general man-of-all-work to the establishment.

How these two, so utterly dissimilar, came to fraternize, none knew.

Possibly it was because they were both alone in the world, without kith or kin, or friends, and their loneliness brought them together.

Anyhow, neither of them knew now. It was darkly whispered that Fane had been no end of a swell, and that he had made ducks and drakes of his money by the time he had reached his majority.

Gambling, wine, and post boys had made short work of him.

He began early, lived fast, and had burnt the candle at both ends, with the usual and inevitable result.

I once heard Dad say that there was a woman in the matter, but always, according to my experience, and that another specimen of the soft sex had also crossed the poor Ogre's path in life, that was before he had lost an eye and had had that unfortunate mishap of the broken nose.

Fane was tall and slender, his features were delicately chiselled, and his dark hair was turning grey at the temples. His large and luminous eyes had an eerie look about them, as if he were looking far away back to his old life and all its happy surroundings.

Dad thought that he took opium. I thought so, too.

In midst all Fane's reverses of fortune, one consolation remained to him, he believed himself a great actor.

On this subject, he spoke to everybody with such an air of calm conviction—conviction totally destitute of bounce or braggadocio—that at last everybody began to believe it.

Anyhow, no one was astonished when it was underlined in the bill of the day, that "by direction of several parties of distinction, Mr. Vere Fane, late of his Majesty's Horse Guards (Blue), would appear as Sir Giles Overreach."

The Ogre confidentially hinted to Dad that it would be necessary for him to look to his laurels.

As for Vere, he went about the rehearsals in a workmanlike way, and even father admitted that he was "all there in the bit."

There was a great house, Lord Barrymore (who had been a pal of Fane's in his prosperous days) came in a drag, brought with him the Prince Regent, Silly Billy, the Moore the poet, Jackson, the lightning man, and a select circle of noble Corinthians.

There was a little difficulty in consequence of poor Fane having no "props," but Dad lent him his best silk tights and his sword, while Mam provided a lace collar and cuffs, and a ballet skirt.

The Ogre dressed him and made him up, and brought him a glass of port wine negus to make a picturesque look, and when he made his first entrance the Prince and his friends applauded furiously, and the house followed suit.

As Vere said, Fane looked a picture, but when he began to act—Jerusalem!

I had never seen Kean then, but Dad said that it was the most grotesque caricature of Kean's most striking peculiarities possible to imagine.

At first the audience tried to take it seriously, but it was impossible, and when at length one of the good fellows, "Bravo, Kean!" and another responded.

Kean be blowed! It's Kean and milk and water! It was all over.

Roar followed roar. At first Fane didn't know what to make of it.

Despite his sympathy, even Dad could not repress an occasional smile.

Mam and the Ogre stood at the wine, highly indignant, and trying to encourage poor Sir Giles, who was turning to face both head and heart.

At length came the great scene of the last act. Here the burlesque culminated into tragedy.

As Sir Giles commenced the famous passage—"Ha! I'm feeble! Some undone widow sits upon mine arm," there arose a tempest of cat-calls and derision.

Then he made an effort which Dad declared Kean never approached at his best.

With a shriek of wounded warhorse, Vere exclaimed, "Curse you! Canaille! Curse you! You're broken my heart!"

For a moment he stood erect and terrible, with flashing eyes and outstretched hands, then a crimson stream burst from his lips, deluging his lace collar and ballet skirt with blood, as he tottered back, and fell senseless in my father's arms.

Mam motioned to me to ring down the curtain. I descended in solemn silence a pall fell upon the brutes in front, and they quickly, but noiselessly, left the house.

Doctor Taylor (the theatre doctor, as we called him) was immediately called in.

"Poor fellow," said he, "he has burst a blood vessel!"

child, put him in a cab, and drove home with him. From that time forth the theatre saw no more of Vere Fane.

I called, however, every day with Mam to inquire how he was getting on, and to take a bunch of grapes or a handful of flowers, or two or three oranges.

"Poor fellow! He was very feeble now."

"Jim is very good, Mrs. Delmore," said he. "He is like a brother to me."

"Brother be blawed!" growled the Ogre. "I feel for all the world like a mother to you, captain. There, there, you'll soon be better, laddie."

"Oh! yes. I shall soon be better and fit to act again," gasped Fane.

"Poor gentleman! his acting days are over," sighed Mam, as we walked homeward.

CHAPTER IV.
 WHAT EDWARD KEAN FOUND UNDER THE FLOAT-LIGHTS.

It was at or about this time, that Edmund Kean came to play for his sister, Phoebe Carey's, benefit. A great, fair, fine, boxom creature she was, and not the least bit like him.

Dad used to say that they might have had the same mother, but certainly not the same father.

Dad and Kean had been brother actors, when Dad was a big pot and Edmund small potatoes. In the old days Kean used to be sweet on Mam, but she loved Dad's little finger better than Kean's whole body.

Perhaps Dad felt it rather hard that things had changed so, and I think he was a little cooler to Kean than was altogether necessary. As for Mam, she never even saw him at that time.

Well, of course, there was a great house on the occasion of his appearance, so great that he was re-engaged for a few nights, during which he crammed the theatre to overflowing.

People thought him a great actor, but Mam stoutly maintained that if he had had the chance Dad could have acted his head off.

In point of fact, he did so one night, when he broke down in 'King Dick,' and Dad finished the part and carried everything before him.

The little man took good care not to give away another chance, for he never broke down again during that engagement.

Of course he played all his great parts, Shylock—which was very fine—Lucius Junius, in 'Howard's End,' 'The Fall of Targu,' 'Bertram,' in that mad Irish person's lurid play; and Hamlet—in which he could not hold a candle to Dad.

On the last night, Kean played Sir Giles; but another part was acted on that occasion which eclipsed the greatest effort of the great tragedian, and this was how it befell.

At that time gas had not been introduced into the minors, indeed, it was in its infancy at the best houses.

The Covent Garden people had "set up a tam-bourine of their own," with the result that the boiler burst, and six men were killed in the explosion. After that they gave up manufacturing gas on their own book, and subscribed to the gas company.

Of course we had no gas in Grub-street. Our float-lights were oil lamps fixed in a wooden trough, which was lowered down out of sight by a lever, so that the wicks might be trimmed underneath the stage between the acts.

While the last scene was being played, the float-lights began to bob up and down in the most eccentric manner.

Dad was on the stage for Wellborn, and he kept growling at me, "Get to the lever!"

To the lever I got, and brought all my feeble strength to bear, so as to keep the lights straight, but, despite all that I could do, they still kept bobbing up and down, for all the world like a will-o'-the-wisp.

At length, just as Sir Giles was glaring at his daughter, and frightening her out of her seven senses, and the "pit rose at him," down went the lights altogether.

As soon as he got off the stage, up sprang Kean. "I'll ring down, Fred," says he, "while you see what's up below."

Away I ran as fast as I could split. As soon as I got under the stage, in the dim light I saw a man apparently hanging on to the trough, which still kept dancing up and down.

"Pretty blackguard you are," said I, "coming playing your lark here; but I'll astonish you."

"I didn't astonish him, but he astonished me, for when I caught hold of him he wouldn't come away. He couldn't, poor wretch! for he had hanged himself to the float-board, and as he had as Julius Cæsar."

Dad said that he heard me yell out, "Dead! dead!"

Then it seems I gave a scream, which rang through the theatre, and when he and Kean and the Ogre came running down after me, and found me lying senseless, they thought that I was dead too.

"Take the boy upstairs," said Kean to my father, "and Jim, bring a light here and let's have a look at this poor creature."

When the light fell upon the white face of the motionless figure before them, Kean exclaimed, "Fane! My God! Fane!"

"Oh! don't say that, don't say that, Muster Kean!" shrieked Jim.

It was all too true. Poor Fane had played his last part on the stage of life!

He had never been inside the theatre since the time of his unfortunate fall; until this fatal night. His mind had been morose and unyielding by the ruffianly outrage of which he had been the victim.

Seeing Kean announced for Sir Giles, the poor fellow couldn't keep away.

The hall porter stated that he had slipped by him, and started under the stage, just as the overture was beginning, and there he remained during the whole of the play.

Evidently he must have been quite alone, for no one saw him during the evening.

What tortures must he not have endured through those long weary acts, during which the theatre rang with the applause of the dazzled and delighted audience. How he must have contrasted Kean's reception with his own!

The poor fellow must have entered into his soul, and driven him to madness, and with the loud triumph of the conquering Kean still ringing in his ears, the poor creature had made his exit through time into eternity.

It was Kean himself who cut him down. Kean, who, attired as he was for Sir Giles, carried him to the Shakspeare round the corner.

Next day the inquest was held, with the result that a verdict of *found dead* was returned.

In those good old times the barbarous custom of driving a stake through the suicide's heart and burying him in the cross roads still obtained, but Jim Stoddart, who had never left the body, swore that, come what might, his poor friend should never be exposed to that barbarity!

CHAPTER V.
 THE WOMAN WITH THE YELLOW HAIR.

It was during the dull season, and the papers were all full of sensational accounts of the "awful occurrence at the Grub-street Theatre," while Mr. Kean was acting Sir Giles Overreach.

About two hours after the inquest, while I stood at the door, up rattled a carriage and pair to the Shakspeare, and out sprang a tall, fair woman of remarkable beauty and distinction.

A cloak was loosely thrown around her shoulders, down which streamed a wilderness of yellow hair. Her great blue eyes looked as if they were about to start from their sockets—in short, she appeared dead and damned.

with inquiries, but they remained discreetly reticent. Not a word could be extracted from them as to whom or what their mistress was.

Her incognito was well guarded.

There was as much mystery

"Can't you see the stage is waiting? Now then, wake up!"

Thus adjured, poor Jim put his hand in his pocket and handed Dad a phial. By this time the stage was actually waiting, so he thrust it in his breast without looking at it, and rushed on.

Just as he was in the act of working the lever to drop the footlights, a well-known voice whispered in my ear, "Tell him not to drink. There's death in the phial."

The voice thrilled through blood and brain. Could I be awake or dreaming?

So surely as God is in heaven, so surely Vere Fane stood beside me!

While father's life was in peril I had no time to faint or any of that nonsense, so I rushed to the upper entrance on the "prompt" side, and whispered, "Dad, don't drink, for God's sake, don't drink!"

I was too late. He had just exclaimed, "Here's to my love," and swallowed the poison.

At that period Garrick's adaptation of the play was usually acted, and for that reason, instead of Romeo dying there, and then Juliet awakes, and there is a powerful scene between the lovers before the final catastrophe ensues.

Imagine, therefore, my astonishment and consternation when, the moment after he had swallowed the poison, Dad slipped back and fell like a load of bricks upon the stage.

For a moment I thought he had introduced a new effect, but when I found he didn't move hand or foot I rang down like a shot, and rushed over to him.

Poor Dad! I thought he was dead in reality. That idiot, Jim, had given him his own laudanum phial, which was full, having only been a moment before replenished.

Dad would have been a dead man if Doctor Taylor had not fortunately happened to be in the front row of the play.

Quick as lightning, the fair Juliet and the Count of Paris came to life, and began to walk Romeo to and fro, and the doctor sent for the stomach pump, while Botticelli brot Jim neck and crop out of the theatre, vowing that if he ever came back he'd be the death of him.

Dad had a near squeak for it. Although he got over it, he was unable to act for the remainder of the week, and as we had no one to take his place the theatre had to close.

From that time henceforth bad luck hovered around us and about us, and thenceforth we never had a single paying house.

Presently we got to half salaries, then to quarter salaries, and, at last, to scarcely any at all.

At length poor Botticelli, the manager, bolted, and we kept the theatre open as a commonwealth.

This was bad for everybody, but, for us, worse than any one, for there were now seven mouths to fill at home, and it was quite evident that there would soon be another.

Poor dear Mam was so patient and so uncomplaining, that, young as I was, it made my heart bleed to see her. Many a time she and Dad and I went without our scanty share of the baubles might have a bellyful. At last there was not a fire in the grate, nor a crust in the cupboard.

It was just at this time that my sister Bess—that the brunette (la belle Brunette, as Charles Kemble used to call her) that's now Lady Keesmount—took it into her head to make her first appearance a little earlier than was expected.

Dad was in a state of distraction, for we had pledged and sold everything we could raise a shilling on, down even to his Richard dress, the loss of which almost broke his heart.

Our doctor was a noble fellow, and sent mother wine and soup and jellies, and instead of taking a guinea from Dad, he often lent him one.

As soon as the news got to the theatre, Mrs. Maguire and Miss Dorian (the old woman and the heavy lady) came and bundled Dad and me out of the house, saying, "Men are clumsy fellows and always in the way, and the poor darling don't want to be worried with the sight of you."

We had to go and take up our quarters at Mrs. Maguire's, till Mam got round.

But as she, poor dear, got better day by day, business got worse, until starvation again stared us in the face.

Dad had haunted the stage-door at the Dame d'Alton, for Kean had promised to get him an engagement there, but the engagement never came, and the great little man was never to be seen now.

When Dad came home one day, weary and foot-sore, mother inquired:

"Any good news, dear?"

"None," he replied. "Of course, he's a great man now, and forgets when we padded the boots from Plymouth to Penzance with only tuppence between us, and slept under a hayrick together."

"And you, dear, leaving man, and be (drunken little brute) glad to play Harlequin or the monkey in 'Perouse,' or anything he could get. But, never mind, darling, better luck will come by-and-by."

"I fear good luck and I have parted company long ago, lass," said Dad rather moodily. "Better for you, after all, if you'd married him, Bess."

"Dick, you'll make me angry if you go on like that. You know, there's only one man in the world for me, and his name is Dick, you old darling."

Then she kissed him, and for awhile they forgot their troubles.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECOND WARNING: BLINDED!

One would have thought the worst had come by this time, but it hadn't.

One night we were to play "The Honeymoon," and "The Children in the Wood." Tiny and Polly being the babies, and Dad the Walter.

After rehearsal he told me to be sure and furnish up the combat words, which were very rusty.

I had learnt the property man's shibboleth already, so I said, "All right at night, Dad," and off I went to have a game at ball with Tim Maguire, Mrs. Maguire's son and heir.

When our play was over, Tim asked me home to tea. I was always hungry in those days, and didn't stay to be asked twice.

After tea I remembered the combat words, and off I ran to the theatre to polish them up. With the aid of a little oil and rosin, I had made 'em look pretty smart and bright, when, all at once, night fell, and it became pitch dark.

The property-room was a cheerful hole at all times. On the mantelpiece York's skull mounted guard with a perpetual grin upon his fleshless cheeks; on a shelf to the right, twenty or thirty skulls, with blood-red patches in "the holes" which eyes did once inhabit. On the opposite side were the skeleton of a monkey, a stuffed lizard, and the spectral hunt from Der Freischütz.

The theatre itself was a ghastly place, and just now it was awfully quiet. Not a sound, not a breath could be heard, save the squeaking of an erratic rat, as it scuttled up and down the wainscot.

Remember, I was only a little chap of ten, and I was always afraid of the darkness. There were no lucifer matches in those days, but I remembered that there was a farthing dip in a ginger beer bottle on the table, and that the tinder-box was on the mantelpiece.

Shutting my eyes, I began to grope for the tinder-box. The first thing I put my hand upon was York's skull. The next contact gave me the cold shivers, and as I started back, down fell poor York's cranium, squashed like an eggshell.

Presently I found the tinder-box, and began to strike the flint on the steel, almost knocking my knuckles off in the operation.

It was ever so long before I could elicit a spark. At last the tinder caught. I put the bright stone match to it, caught a light, was in the act of lighting the candle, but—don't laugh—I know you are a sceptic! but don't laugh.

Remember there was neither drink nor indignation to account for it, but Vere Fane stood before me once more!

He was in the doorway, and a strange kind of nebulous light seemed to surround him.

"Fred," said he to me, in a soft strange voice,

"Fred, tell the Dad not to fight to-night. Above all, not to fight with those swords!"

At the sound of the well-known voice the candle dropped from my hands. It fluttered and went out. As it did so, he vanished, and I was alone in the darkness.

I remembered nothing more till some hours later, when I awoke and found myself on the sofa in Dad's dressing-room. He was already dressed for Walter.

As soon as I could realise where I was, I told him what had happened.

He listened in silence, then tried to persuade me that I had fallen asleep, and that what I had thought I had seen was only a dream, or an hallucination, but I knew better.

"Anyhow," said I, "Dad, whether it was a dream or not, don't use those swords to-night."

"I must, my boy," he replied, "for the best of all possible reasons—I've got no others."

"Oh, dad," I cried, "I'm sure poor Vere didn't come back for nothing. Only think—"

"Nonsense, my boy. What harm can come from a pair of old iron hoops like those? They're not sharp enough to cut butter with, and in spite of my entreaties, off he went to the stage."

I lay shivering, and watching, and waiting for the light.

As soon as I heard the clash of the swords up I jumped, and ran to the wings.

He and Brownlow, who played Oliver, were splendid swordsmen, and they were "knocking" 'em.

The audience were wild with excitement. The fight approached a climax, when just as Dad was administering his swashing blow, the swords struck a perfect shower of fire! Starting back, he exclaimed, with an agonised cry:

"God! I'm blinded!"

And so he was, for a spark of burning steel had struck him in the very orbit of the right eye.

He tried to finish the play, but couldn't, and we had to get him home at once and send for Doctor Taylor.

Unfortunately, he had gone to Margate for his holiday.

It was nearly one o'clock in the morning and we didn't know any other physician in the neighbourhood.

Next day inflammation set in.

Another doctor was consulted, who didn't understand the case, and he said Mam must send for a specialist.

The people at the theatre were most kind, but they were all miserably poor and powerless to help us.

Mam thought of Kean, who, she felt sure, would come and help his old comrade in his tribulation; so Bunter, the low comedian, volunteered to go down to the Lane and inquire for the great little man, but came back with the news that he was away in the country starring.

Dad suffered agonies untold, but bore them like a man. Once only once—when he thought we were all asleep—I heard him say in the middle of the night, "If I fall blind, what will become of them, my little darling and my poor bairns? God, oh, God, have pity on them and me."

Surely He listened to that prayer, for next day our dear doctor came back.

When he had examined the poor eyes—for the inflammation had now got to the left eye as well as the right—He, who was usually the most quiet, most gentlemanly of men, cursed and swore like Tom o' Bedlam, nearly frightening poor Mam out of her wits.

"Why the—didn't you send for me, woman?" he roared. "Dye know what you've done? You've blinded the man! Yes, blinded him for life!"

"No, no, sir, no. For the love of God, don't say that!" cried Mam, wringing her hands and pulling her hair, till I thought she'd have gone out of her mind there and then.

"Don't cry, my pet," said Dad cheerily; "don't cry. It'll be all right by-and-by."

"All right!" rejoined the doctor. "It must be all right! By G—it shall be all right, or I'll know the reason why. Pull yourself together, Delmore, and you, little woman, stop howling, and slip on your bonnet and shawl. My brougham's at the door; come with me to Park-lane at once, and you, boy, had better get on the box."

In half an hour's time we were in Park-lane. A train of lords and ladies, dukes and duchesses, and I don't know what else were awaiting the great oculist's good will and pleasure, but as soon as he got Doctor Taylor's postcard he shunted them all, and sent us into his own private room, which he came in immediately.

When he had examined Dad he shook his head ominously.

"Bad case! It might have been worse, but not much. Four-and-twenty hours more, and it would have been too late."

"We'll see what we can do now, anyhow," Simpson, said he to his attendant, a bottle of Madeira and a plate of sandwiches, and look alive about it."

Then he began to talk about the theatre. (He had seen Dad play Hamlet at Plymouth.) Then they discussed the Madeira and the sandwiches, and Doctor Taylor bundled me out of the room before they commenced operations.

Off I went for a stroll in the park.

As I got near the Serpentine I saw a spot, eager, and excited crowd thronging round the banks on either side.

Being such a little chap, I couldn't get through, and, of course, I couldn't see anything; but from what the people said I could gather that a woman had drowned herself a few days before.

"Oh, yes," said a nurserymaid, who left her bairns to play on the grass while she was spooning with a strapping Life Guardsman. "They say she's a regular heavy wail. She's been in the water these three days, lastways, they missed her from Park-lane the night of the wedding, and the old bloke, her 'usband, 'as been off 'is nut ever since."

When the girl ceased to speak, a strange presentiment came over me.

Swarming up a tree, which enabled me to see to the middle of the river, I found the presentiment had proved prophetic.

Before me lay the woman with the yellow hair, gently floating on the placid surface of the lake.

She was clad in a rich bridal dress, trimmed with orange blossoms, over which, like a misty shroud, fell a great fall of priceless lace.

The floating figure was an awful vision of loveliness in death, and the yellow hair streamed over her like a mantle of gold.

The great blue eyes were staring out of her head—even as they were when I saw her for the first and only time on the day of the inquest.

She was staring up at the sun, and never blinched beneath his burning beams.

I have often wondered since what my lady was thinking of then.

A hush fell upon the crowd as a boat drew near to take the body aboard.

I could bear to see no more, so I slid down the tree and turned towards Park-lane. As I did so, I should I come full butt on to Jim Stoddard, who had just then forced his way through the crowd. Was it chance or fatality had brought him there? His face was ghastly pale, and he seemed even more demented than usual.

"Ah, Fred!" he muttered, "I tell you I'd come 'ome to her, and it has come 'ome at last."

Before I could reply he was gone!

wanted him to go, too, but he pleaded so piteously to stay at home that she couldn't find it in her heart to say him nay.

"What should I do, dear," said he, "without the sound of your voice and without the blessed baubles to play with?"

His health was now all right, but, alas, his sight, his precious sight, was still wrong.

The company had managed to keep the theatre open somehow or other, and they now proposed to give him a benefit.

Of course we wanted to make a strong bill, so Bunter suggested that Dad should himself go down to the New Brunswick, which was to open that very night, and ask some of the boys to come and act for the benefit. So down he and I went.

When we got to the stage-door we asked for Saker, the low comedian, and the porter went in to inquire.

"What sort of a place is it, Fred?" inquired Dad.

"Oh, ever so much bigger and handsomer than Grub-street."

"It may well be that. Shall I ever live to see it or to act in it, I wonder?"

"Of course you will. The doctor said yesterday it was only a question of time."

Just at this moment our comrade Saker, "Dick, old man," says he, "I'm awful glad to see you."

"I should be glad to see you, Horatio," replies Dad, "but I'm afraid I shall never see you again."

"Nonsense, nonsense! But come round the corner and have two penn'orth. I've got five minutes' wait. You can tell me all about the benefit there. Fred, stay here and come and call me when I'm wanted."

And away went the two old comrades.

For my part I wanted to have a peep at the house, so I got past the hall porter and sneaked up to the stage-box, where the rehearsal was going on.

It was a charming theatre, and looked spick and span new.

Of course, when you're behind the scenes at a strange place you always feel as if the first carpenter or property-man you come across will bundle you out, so I merely peeped cautiously round the wing at the second entrance O.P.

The stage was filled with people rehearsing the opening play, the orchestra was filled, too, and the stage-manager, a venomous little hunchback, who was said to be very clever, was giving instructions both to actors and musicians in an imperious voice.

"Silence!" said he. "And, Mr. Isaacson, let the instruments be muted, and try that last measure again. No, no! Not a bit like it. Twice the loud, faintissimo and tremolo, like the soft low breath of the wind."

You might have heard a pin drop as the orchestra played the plaintive melody. I am strangely susceptible to music (perhaps because Mam never finished that solo, "O, power supreme," upon that critical occasion when I made my first appearance at York) and I was moved to tears.

Although the day was stilling, at that moment a breath of cold air passed over me and sent me shivering. "Some one's walking over my grave," I muttered.

"Not a word," Fred, a soft voice whispered in my ear. "Tis you who are walking over a graveyard at this moment. Come!"

At the sound I turned, and once more before me stood Vere Fane!

Without taking his eyes—those sad, weird eyes—from me, He—moved rapidly down the passage. This time I was not the least afraid, and I followed fast as my feet could carry me through the lobby, through the porter's lodge, out into the open air, till we reached the fair daylight, when He—It—melted into air!

Before me stood Dad and Saker, who were just about to enter the stage-door.

At that moment behind me arose a roar like a peal of artillery, and where the theatre had stood a moment ago, lay a heap of ruins!

The shrieks of wounded men and dying women arose and filled the air—then, silence.

"My God! what's the matter?" cried Dad.

"The roof has fallen in!" I replied.

"My poor dad, what's happened?" said Saker.

"And only to think, Dick, that two penn'orth has saved my life!"

"And my eyesight," said Dad.

Sure enough, God be thanked, that terrible shock had restored his sight, his blessed sight!

Of course, Mr. Materialist, I don't expect you to believe what I shall believe to my dying day, that my poor dear friend came back from the shades to save the life of the poor lad whom he loved. Never mind! whether you believe or not, the thought gives me consolation here and hope hereafter, so I cling to it.

Would that some other messenger from heaven had warned the poor creatures, who lay dead or dying beneath the ruins.

Can I ever forget that scene of horror?

There is another scene—see now, and shall always see, as I saw it then, the meeting of father and mother when we got home; but it is too sweet, too solemn, and too sacred to dwell upon.

CHAPTER X.

THE STRANGE STORY OF A TOMSTONE.

In a few days Dad was in harness again; but dear, oh dear, the business in that unfortunate Grub-street!

At first we were so delighted at his recovery that we left of all minor troubles, but we hadn't as yet learnt how to live without eating.

At last, one memorable Saturday, there had been no breakfast, nor was there likely to be any dinner, when Dad and I set off to the theatre.

When we commenced rehearsal I don't think there was an inch of back bone left in the whole company, although everybody hoped against hope that there might be something in the hour and a half, so as at least to provide a dinner for the morning.

At the end of the first act Bunter came in and told Dad Kean had come back. Bunter had met the great man the night before at the Harp, with Billy Osberry and Jerry Sneak Russell.

He told Bunter to tell Dad he was coming up, and that he had good news. What could the good news be?

Of course, we wanted them badly enough. It was the sultriest August I ever remember. The sun was high in heaven; there was not a breath of air stirring, and the stage was like a hot-house.

What sensible being would enter a theatre under such conditions, when green fields, hedgerows, and rivers were within hail.

With an aching heart and an empty stomach I followed fast to the stage-door. The street was quite deserted, save for a bairn or two, who lay basking in the gutter, when all at once I heard the rattle of horses' hoofs, and the roll of wheels, and up drives a splendid carriage, with crested pilot on the panels, lions rampant, and the bloody hand atop, a pair of spanking greys with silver harness, a great fat bewigged coachman on a silver pounce, and two footmen, one in a blue and one in a red livery, on the splash-board behind.

Amidst all this splendour, I couldn't help pitying the poor horses, for they were in a muck sweat, and the coachman nearly pulled their pretty heads off to bring them up.

One of the great lordly creatures behind steps down, flourishing a great gold-headed cane, opens the carriage door, and out comes a young man in a red coat, a white waistcoat, and a white hat, turned up with green, white choker and vest, yellow knees, and a blue coat with brass buttons.

* Fact.

† Last this marvellous recovery should be called in question, the author gives the following paragraph from the P. M. Gazette of October 2nd, 1889: "A strange case of recovery of sight was reported yesterday on the authority of Father Godfrey, of Birmingham. An old lady (residing in years) fell over a cart the other day, and was rendered insensible. She was not to be seen, and on recovering consciousness, she was astonished to find that she had recovered her sight."

"Hallo, my man!" says he, "is this the Grub-street Theatre?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is the manager here?"

"Yes, sir," says I, and away I ran, calling for Dad, who came out in double quick time.

"Mr. Delmore," says the strange gentleman. "Here is my card. My father was the incumbent of this chapel fifty years ago. For all that time I have been in the Indies. I've made a fortune there, but I've come home to lay my bones amongst my kindred. My father was the best of men, and I love and honour his memory. There was a tablet erected to him in this chapel. It's an old man's weakness, but I've set my heart on that tablet. If it can be found, I'll pay a hundred guineas for it."

By this time, all the company had assembled round Dad.

I've painted many pictures in my time, but I should despair of ever depicting the fluctuations of hope and fear on those poor, wax faces at the sound of those words.

"A hundred guineas!" echoed Dad, mechanically.

And then the thought of poor Mam, the baby, the bairns, and the empty cupboard at home, and "a hundred guineas." Was there so much money in the world?

Dad whispered, "there's a lot of marble slabs and brass tablets lying in a heap under the stage where I fell down that night."

"So there is, my boy," he replied. "My lord," said he to the stranger, "if you don't mind waiting a little while, we'll endeavour to find what you want."

"If you'll allow me, sir, I'll sit on the stage and await your convenience."

By all means, sir," replies Dad.

So on to the stage went the gentleman, and under it went we. Such a hunting up of candle-ends and lamps as now commenced you never saw. Off went coats, up went shirt sleeves, while every slab and bit of brass was overhauled and carefully examined. But, alas! there was no sign of what we required.

We had been nearly an hour in this stuffy atmosphere, sick at heart, hungry, exhausted with fatigue, and nearly stifled with the filthy vapour which arose around us, when just as we were about to give it up as a bad job, to the astonishment of everybody, who should turn up but the Ogre!

We had never set eyes on him since the night when he'd poisoned poor Dad.

"What's up, guv'nor?" says Jim.

"Nothing; nothing that you can help us in, drunken brute."

"Don't be so down on poor Jim, guv'nor. I'm not drunk now. I never meant to poison you. I'd sooner poison myself twenty times over than a 'armed air' of your 'ead."

"That'll do; that'll do. Don't you see you are in the way?"

"Pears to me I'm allays in the way; but He told me to come, and here I am!"

"Who told you to come?"

"Why, He did! My poor boy, Vere!"

"Go along, you are mad!"

"That's all you know. Anyhow, He comes to me an hour ago (make no error, He often comes), and he says, says he, 'Jim, hurry up to the theatre; you're wanted. Now, it pears to me you're lookin' arter one of them stones.'"

"Suppose Jim could find it for you?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, when I belonged to the hartiatic department of this palatial hestabishment, the state of the finances wouldn't run to a new painting slab, so I tuk the liberty o' collarin the best o' tae hoaps' these things to grind my colours

When the aroused camp saw the capture of the ruffian claimed a share of the booty.

